SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 00618 2969

923.41 Se66L
Sergeant
Liars and fakers
662941

MAIN LIBRARY

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

923.41 SE66L 662941

FORM 3431 10-54

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 00618 2969

DUE DATE

SFPL DEC 1 - '88

SFPL JUL 2 '89

FEB 2 2 1995

201-6503

Printed in USA

# *LIARS AND FAKERS*

# LIARS AND FAKERS

## By PHILIP W. SERGEANT

*Author of "Rogues and Scoundrels," "The Life of Anne Boleyn, etc., etc."*

*With 8 Illustrations*

LONDON: HUTCHINSON & CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW

923.41
Se66l
662941

3 1223 00618 2969

*Made and Printed in Great Britain by*
*The Camelot Press Limited, Southampton*

# PREFACE

"WHOM are you going to leave out?" asked my publisher when I first suggested to him the title of this book. "Ourselves, of course," I replied. As I spoke, though I did not forget the words of hasty David, I had no idea how innumerable were the candidates for inclusion in the fraternity of liars. The difficulty soon presented itself, however, how many could be admitted within the covers of one volume.

The Rev. Titus Oates was the real solver of the riddle. The obese "Salamanca Doctor" declined an invitation like that alleged to have been addressed to an eminent modern man of letters, to get up and give his seat to two. There were, indeed, two ladies waiting, had there been room for them. But Trusty Titus took his own way, as at the Old Bailey under the then benignant eyes of L.C.J. Scroggs; and the space left for the others was much curtailed.

Next, Thomas Dangerfield, who had always appeared to me, from the writings of historians, very much of a mystery man, proved on closer investigation to have about him a considerable amount of literary luggage of an entertaining nature. So he, too, occupied more room than I had originally anticipated.

Psalmanazar, friend of Dr. Johnson, I knew from that great Johnsonian, Mr. Arthur Machen, if not hitherto from personal acquaintance, to be a problem too large to be considered in a few pages; and I recalled, from the reading in childhood of James Payn's *Talk of the Town*, that William Henry Ireland was the hero-villain of a gigantic hoax upon the intelligence of late eighteenth-century London. Nevertheless, I did not realise that either of them had such claims to consideration as later appeared.

Rightly or wrongly, I allowed these four characters to keep out others whom it had been my first intention to include in the

book. In consequence, my "liars and fakers" have turned out a less comprehensive company than I had planned. I think I may assert, however, that the four are fairly representative of the two classes into which their sort may be divided. If we may look on liars in general as snakes, there are the venomous and the harmless varieties. Oates and, by intention at least, Dangerfield were venomous, Psalmanazar and Ireland harmless, snakes. Those who will may now see them uncoil.

PHILIP W. SERGEANT.

St. John's Wood,
*October*, 1925.

# CONTENTS


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| THE SALAMANCA DOCTOR AND HIS FRIENDS . . . | 11 |
| DUKE DANGERFIELD . . . . . | 133 |
| PSALMANAZAR THE FORMOSAN . . . . . | 199 |
| YOUNG IRELAND: AN UNAPPRECIATED JESTER . . | 237 |

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS


TITUS OATES . . . . . *Frontispiece*

*From an engraving by R. Thompson after the painting by T. Hawker*

*Facing page*

SIR WILLIAM SCROGGS, L.C.J. . . . . 72

*From the painting by an unknown artist in the National Portrait Gallery*

OATES IN THE PILLORY . . . . . 126

*From an engraving after a contemporary print*

ELIZABETH CELLIER ON THE PILLORY . . . . . 146

*From a contemporary broadside formerly in the Strawberry Hill Collection*

THOMAS DANGERFIELD . . . . . 194

*From a contemporary broadside in the Bagford Collection*

GEORGE PSALMANAZAR . . . . . 212

*From a contemporary engraving (frontispiece to his "Memoirs," 1764)*

WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND . . . . . 240

*"Engraved by Mackenzie from an original picture in the possession of Mr. Ireland"*

SAMUEL IRELAND . . . . . 284

*From the caricature by James Gilray*

THE SALAMANCA DOCTOR AND HIS FRIENDS

# THE SALAMANCA DOCTOR AND HIS FRIENDS

## I

"THE dulness of his intellect was consummate, his tongue was stammering, his language that of the streets, his voice harsh and canting, as though he rather wailed than spoke. His memory was treacherous, never faithfully recalling what he had said before. His brow was low, his eyes small and sunk in his head, his visage flat and depressed in the centre, like a platter or dish, with the cheeks standing up from it, his nose rubicund, his mouth in the very centre of his face, his chin nearly as large as the rest of his countenance. His head was scarcely separated from his trunk and hung over his chest ; the rest of his body was to match with all this, more like a monster's than a man's."

Such is the repulsive description of Titus Oates given by the Jesuit, John Warner. Father Warner had known him at St. Omer, the seminary of which he afterwards became Rector, previous to taking the post of confessor to King James II. He had so little reason to look dispassionately on Oates that we might be inclined to consider his portrait exaggerated. But there is ample testimony to prove that there is no exaggeration. Dryden's lines in *Absalom and Achitophel* are too familiar to need quotation. Not so well known is the brief sketch by Roger North, who had many opportunities of seeing Oates at close quarters. "He was a low man," he writes, "of an ill cut, very short neck ; and his visage and features were most particular. His mouth was the centre of his face ; and a compass there would sweep his nose, forehead, and chin within the perimeter. *Cave quos ipse Deus notavit!*"

That chin of his made a great impression on Oates's contemporaries. According to Thomas Brown, author of the celebrated epigram upon Dr. Fell, it was the largest of any gentleman's in

Europe. "By the same token," adds Brown, "they tell a merry story how he cheated a twopenny barber by hiding it under his cloak." As for his hair, he wore "a fair and woolly periwig," we hear; a matter of which the black-a-vised Charles II. did not fail to take notice when discussing the colouring of stage villains.

The comic aspect of Oates's face, however, was not that which struck everyone. When he was a novice at St. Omer, it is alleged that the priest at Mass was "so terrified at the beastlike face of the man that he could scarcely be induced to administer the Sacrament to him."

All these descriptions refer to Oates in adult years. There is only one which gives a picture of him in childhood. It must be admitted that it is equally unpleasing. In the days of his fame his old mother came up to town with her husband, and meeting with William Smith, her son's first schoolmaster, had a confidential talk with him. She told how, while she was bearing Titus, she was always dreaming that she was with child of the Devil; how the birth was very difficult; and then, she continued, as he grew

> "I thought he would have been a natural; for his nose always run, and he slabbered at the mouth, and his father could not endure him; and when he came home at night the boy would use to be in the chimney-corner, and my husband would cry, 'Take this snotty fool away and jumble him about,' which made me often weep, because, you know, he was my child."

Smith says that this is word for word what Mrs. Oates told him; and, indeed, there is the accent of truth in the speech. Mrs. Oates, "much unlike her husband and son, was looked upon by all that knew her to be a very pious and vertuous woman in her way." Of the husband, Samuel Oates, there is more known; but it is little to his credit. The family is supposed to have been originally one of ribbon-weavers in Norwich. Samuel's father, however, was Rector of Marsham, Norfolk, and here Samuel himself was born in 1610. Though Anthony Wood, the antiquary, speaks of him as "formerly a preaching weaver," he seems to have obtained a sizarship at Corpus Christi College,

Cambridge, before his seventeenth birthday, to have taken his B.A. degree in 1630 and his M.A. four years later, and to have been ordained by the Bishop of Norwich in 1635. He married, and, according to what Mrs. Oates told Smith, became the father of a great many children; which effectually disposes of the theory, held by some, that Titus Oates was an only child. Moreover, we do actually hear of two brothers; William, who was notorious as a horse-stealer, and Sam, who was a minor witness at the trial of Knox and Lane in 1679, and was met in Titus's company by Smith in the following year.

The Rev. Samuel Oates was no consistent Churchman. He went with the times, and about 1645 became an Anabaptist. He quickly obtained some celebrity as a preacher and "dipper," but early in 1646 he accidentally caused the death of a young married woman in Essex by immersing her in the river while she was with child. Committed to Colchester gaol, he was acquitted; but his reputation was gravely damaged, and soon after his release a crowd set upon him and threw him into the Chelmer. He gave up "dipping," and for a time seems to have obtained employment as a teacher. It was during this period that his son Titus was born at Oakham, Rutland, in 1649. Next he got a post as chaplain to Colonel Pryde's regiment in the Parliamentary Army, which he held for some years, until in 1654 he was arrested by Monk in Scotland for stirring up sedition among the troops.

We hear no more about Samuel Oates until after the Restoration, when he is once more an Anglican parson. No doubt this is the reason why Bishop Burnet speaks of him as an Anabaptist teacher, who afterwards conformed. But that he was in Anglican orders before the Revolution seems well established. In any case he was a mere time-server and a man of bad character, from whom his son can have learnt little that was likely to profit him morally.

Of the young Titus we gather nothing between his first days and 1664,[1] when he was brought to Merchant Taylors' School as

[1] We may mention, however, the evidence given by Sir Denny Ashburnham, M.P. for Hastings, at the trial of Ireland, Pickering, and Groves in 1678: "I have known Mr. Oates from the cradle, and I do know that when he was a child he was not a person of that credit that we could depend upon what he said."

a free scholar by Nicholas Delves, a member of the Company. The headmaster then was Dr. John Goad, a virtuous man whose career Titus was one day destined to ruin. But it was not with Dr. Goad that the boy came in contact at school. One of the ushers was a William Smith, M.A., and, as Titus " happened to be in the books that were taught in my forms," writes Smith, he was sent down to receive him into the school. Titus had been entrusted by his father with the entrance-money to take to his master, but, saying nothing, kept the money to himself. Many years later, " in his greatness at Whitehall," Titus " generously confessed to the theft and very honestly paid me then."

Apart from this theft of the entrance-money, Smith has no more to say of the young Oates than that he remembers " his perverse and wicked pranks when he was a schoolboy." Whatever these pranks were, they got him expelled from Merchant Taylors in 1665, after less than a year there. His father transferred him to the school at Sedlescombe, outside Hastings ; and in 1666 the Rev. Samuel himself obtained through Sir Richard Barker, a well-known physician, the living of All Saints', Hastings. Thus was established a connection between the Oates family and Hastings for which the town was to have small cause to be grateful. Mrs. Oates's presence there, however, was beneficial, it seems ; for she built up a good business as a midwife.

Titus's stay at Sedlescombe School was not long, though there is no proof in this case that he was compelled to leave. In 1667 he followed his father's example and went up to Cambridge, being admitted on June 29th to Gonville and Caius College as a poor scholar, or " servant to a young gentleman," in Anthony Wood's words. Only seven months later he left, in circumstances unknown, and migrated as sub-sizar to St. John's College. Here his father, to show his orthodoxy, put him under the special charge of Dr. Thomas Watson, one of the Fellows, an Arminian in his religious views and a fervid loyalist, who later, as Bishop of St. David's, was deprived of his see on a charge of simony, which but for his Jacobitism he would doubtless have been able to survive.

Titus did not prove a creditable pupil. The note still survives

in manuscript on his career at St. John's : " He was a liar from the beginning. He stole from and cheated his taylor of a gown, which he denied with horrid imprecations ; and afterwards, at a communion, being admonished and advised by his tutor, confessed the fact. . . . Dr. Thomas Watson does not charge him with much immorality, but says he was a great dunce, that he ran into debt, and, being sent away for want of money, never took a degree."

Wood states that, after leaving Cambridge, young Oates got a small benefice in Norfolk, his father using some influence which he had with the titular Duke, and that he thus quickly procured orders. There certainly seems to have been something irregular about the way in which Titus entered on a clerical career. But Wood is wrong when he makes him, after selling his benefice, become a minister to a man-of-war about the time of the Dutch War (1666). Apart from the matter of his age, he had not even gone to Cambridge then. Whatever Titus did immediately after leaving the University—whether or not he had a temporary benefice in Norfolk—we know that on March 7th, 1673, he was instituted to the vicarage of Bobbing, in Kent, a living which was in the gift of the Duke of Norfolk. Roger North alleges that at Bobbing he stole his neighbours' pigs and hens, and was consequently dismissed. According to William Smith, who had a much closer knowledge of the man than North had, he was first " silenced " by the Archdeacon of Canterbury and then deprived of his faculty ; but Smith gives no reasons.

We have Titus's own account of his connection with Bobbing, given at the trial of Langhorn, the Roman Catholic lawyer, in 1679. Cross-examined by Langhorn, he claimed that he still had a right in equity to that living ; " but, only for going beyond sea without leave of my Ordinary, I am not now vicar." When asked by Lord Chief Justice Scroggs, however, whether he had left his living before he went away (beyond sea), he replied : " It was not very long before ; but the reason why I am not willing to tell is, when I left the parish, I left it in the charge of Mr. Thomas Turner, Vicar of Milton, and I did go near about Chichester and served a sequestration there. The air was not a

good air in that part of Kent, and I had not my health; and that was one reason, and for other reasons best known to myself."

The Lord Chief Justice did not press for further details. "Dr." Oates was King's evidence, and the mysteries of his past life must be respected! Unfortunately we now are not in a position to probe them with much success. All we know is that, some time after leaving Bobbing, Titus went to Hastings, having obtained permission, if we follow some accounts, to act as curate to his father at All Saints'. It was not long before trouble arose. Wood says that father and son "by their vile practices and behaviour became cumbersome and indeed odious to all or most of their parish, endeavouring (among their other wicked tricks) to supplant one William Parker the younger of a schoolmaster's place there, purposing to settle this young Titus therein." The parishioners exhibited articles to the Ordinary for the eviction of the elder Oates. But a friend, who had endeavoured to compose the quarrel, meeting Titus one day and asking him how things were likely to go between his father and the parishioners, received the enigmatic answer, "It is no matter, for there are now irons in the fire which, if they take a right heat, will do the work!"

This Parker the schoolmaster was son of William Parker the elder, Mayor of Hastings, a prominent parishioner of All Saints' and a leader in the complaints to the Bishop against Samuel Oates. Titus's great enemy and ultimate overthrower, L'Estrange, makes the younger Parker keep Titus out of the pulpit "for good reasons," which he does not specify. This may have inspired the Oateses with the idea of getting Parker ousted from his post. Anyhow, Titus was not slow in testing the heat of his "irons in the fire." He brought a monstrous charge of immorality against Parker, one particularly odious in the case of a schoolmaster. So circumstantial was his evidence that the younger Parker was arrested and kept in custody pending the opening of the next sessions.

To prevent him from assisting his son, the elder Parker was also attacked. Titus went up to town and denounced him to the King as having spoken scandalous and treasonable words.

A messenger was sent down to Hastings to summon the accused to appear before the Privy Council; and Charles himself was present at the meeting where the charges, which old Oates also supported, were heard. The result was that, as appears from the evidence given at Lord Castlemaine's trial in 1680, Parker was proved an honest man, while Titus Oates was "sent away with the greatest contempt." We hear from Wood of the exceeding joy of Parker's neighbours and friends, expressed on his return home by ringing of bells, etc.

Neither Titus nor his father suffered anything—beyond the contempt of the Privy Council—for their accusations against the elder Parker. But retribution followed in the case of the younger Parker. When the assizes arrived, the schoolmaster was easily able to prove an *alibi* for the whole of the day on which Titus alleged that he had committed the offence, and he was acquitted. He struck back at once; for, as soon as the court arose, Titus was arrested in an action for £1,000 damages. Being unable to furnish bail, he was sent to Hastings gaol, where he lay for some time, until by *habeas corpus* he was removed to the superior prison of Dover.

It is curious to read in the summing up of Lord Chief Justice Scroggs at the Castlemaine trial, four years later: "There is but little thrown upon Mr. Oates by way of disgrace or infamy; for that verdict that the jury found against his evidence, it is not material, for then every man must be accused when the jury does not go according to the evidence which he gives." The court had had before it the full evidence as to the trial of young Parker at Hastings; and it is difficult to see how Scroggs could tell the jury that no "disgrace or infamy" attached to Titus Oates in the matter. No doubt he was talking in a legal sense, but his words were scarcely well chosen.

The elder Oates, according to Wood, was "outed of his benefice" at All Saints', Hastings, for his share in the plot against the Parkers; and he describes him in 1678 as "sculking in London, about Bloomsbury, upon the friendly allowance of his holy sisters, till now upon the point of advancement againe by means of his son's discoveries." We do not know whether this

account is correct. When next we hear of the Rev. Samuel, he is evidently living in Hastings again.

Titus did not pay the full penalty for his abominable perjury against Parker. From Dover gaol he managed to make his escape, possibly with the aid of bribes. He came up to London and, says Wood, " lay in obscurity there, being most earnestly pursued and sought for." Possibly, the better to cover up his tracks, he went to sea, for there is a suggestion that at one time in his life he visited Tangier. The next definite information that we have about him is that he is a chaplain in the Royal Navy, under Sir Richard Ruth. We have seen that Wood knew of this phase of Oates's career, but placed it too early. Nor can we believe that even so brazen a scoundrel as he can have proceeded straight from his escape from prison to a chaplaincy in the Navy. We must suppose some short interval, and even then must wonder how he obtained credentials sufficient to induce Sir Richard Ruth to take him in his ship.

His connection with the Royal Navy was brief and shameful. Within a few months he was expelled ; and the grounds, there seems no doubt, were the same as those which he had alleged against William Parker the younger. Bishop Burnet mentions the story as if he accepted its truth. Later Titus had the effrontery to tell, or to get his ally Tonge to tell, quite a different tale. When the Privy Council, before Titus's introduction to them in September 1678, desired some account of him (his appearance in the case of Parker senior having been forgotten, it seems), Tonge told them of his chaplaincy in the Navy, but represented that he had been unjustly deprived of it for revealing some irregular dealings. No one questioned the statement, as far as we know, though it must have been possible to ascertain the facts without much labour.

After his summary expulsion from the Navy, Titus Oates was for some time without employment. He lived in London, on his wits, we may suppose, or perhaps on charity from the aunts mentioned by Wood as supporting his father. Then, in August 1676, he ran across his old master, William Smith. The latter relates how, " after I was burnt out of Merchant Taylors' School "

by the Great Fire, he had gone as master to the Lady Owen's Free School at Islington, of which the Brewers' Company were the Governors, and there he still was. He was acquainted with a certain Matthew Medburne, a Roman Catholic actor in the Duke of York's company, who one day introduced to him a clergyman whom he had just picked up in " the Earl of Suffolk's cellar at Whitehall." The Rev. Titus Oates was in his canonical garments, and Smith did not recognise him until he told who he was. The three then went to the Sun Tavern in Aldersgate Street for a drink—which was no uncommon practice of many of the clergy, of all denominations, in those days.

Both Medburne and Smith were to rue bitterly this August day on which they met Titus Oates. The actor introduced him to a club that met at the Pheasant in Fuller's Rents, near Gray's Inn, of which both he and Smith were members. This club had a mixed membership of Protestants and Roman Catholics ; but Smith says that he never heard any dispute about religion or State affairs at it, such subjects, indeed, being forbidden by a rule imposing a fine of 6*d*. on anyone who should attempt to discuss them.

Smith, who states that he had " a very indifferent opinion " of Titus on renewing his acquaintance, suggests that Medburne was attracted to him by the habit he had fallen into, since he lost his vicarage of Bobbing, of railing against the Church of England. He did this, Smith thinks, with the intention of winding himself into the good opinion of the Roman Catholics. That 6*d*. fine must have prevented him from indulging in the habit at the club ; but no doubt he felt no constraint outside.

Titus still continued to wear his canonicals, however, and, though he had no church of his own, he was not unwilling to preach in others' pulpits. Smith relates a story how

> " [Oates] coming one day to see me at Islington, after we had dined we intended to go into London to meet Medburne. But in our way, passing by Sadler's Musick-House we met Dr. Slater, the Vicar of Clerkenwell, who complimented his seeming brother clergyman very gravely, and desired him to except

[*sic*] of a glass of ale with him, upon which, growing more familiar, he desired him to give him a sermon next Sunday, which Oates after much entreaty promised. But I took the Dr. aside, and besought him not to except of it for some private reasons I knew, which I did not particularise to him. But he, thinking it might be only an excuse, resolved to accept Oates's proffer, and accordingly Oates preached ; and in his sermon, speaking all along very bitterly against Calvin, he called him always Jack. This sermon gave very heinous offence to two great admirers of Calvin, Mr. Barker and Mr. Walsh . . . who sending for the Dr. gave him a very severe reprimand for suffering such a fellow to appear in his pulpit. . . . This sermon by the by, after Oates's exaltation and renown of being a Discoverer, was sold by him to Mr. Sawbridge for 40 or 50 guineas."

We get another reference to Titus in the pulpit, which looks as if it might belong to this period. In his biography of his brother Francis, Baron Guilford, Roger North says that the Lord Keeper " once heard Oates preach at St. Dunstan's, and much admired his theatrical behaviour in the pulpit : he prayed for his very good lord and patron, the Duke of Norfolk, which made his lordship suspect him to be warping towards popery."

" Warping toward popery," by whatever motive he was actuated, Titus certainly was, soon after he met Medburne. But he did not yet decide to abandon the Church of England. First, either through his new Roman Catholic friends or through his father's long-standing connection with the Duke of Norfolk, he obtained a post in that nobleman's household—some say as chaplain to the Protestant members of the staff. Here, of course, he was brought into contact with many Romanists, among them being the Jesuit Father, Hutchinson, *alias* Berry. Oates, from whose lips praise, alas ! is a doubtful commendation, at a later period described Hutchinson as " a saint-like man, or one that was religious for religion's sake." Burnet is much less complimentary. Hutchinson, he says, was " a weak and light-headed man, and afterwards came over to the Church of England." We shall hear of Hutchinson's conversion later on.

After a short stay in the Duke of Norfolk's household, Titus made up his mind to declare himself a Roman Catholic ; and on Ash Wednesday, 1677, Hutchinson received his proselyte into the Church.

What was the real motive of Titus Oates in taking this step ? He had been for some time past railing against the Church of England ; but this in itself does not prove any love of Rome. His attitude towards religion was the reverse of reverential. We learn from Burnet how, quite early in his career, he had been "complained of for some very indecent expressions concerning the Christian mysteries." It is possible to suppose, of course, that the eloquence of Hutchinson produced some effect on Titus, and made him for a brief period think to obtain salvation in Roman Catholicism. But it is difficult to believe this villain sincere even for a few days in his life.

The motive of gain is an obvious suggestion ; but what did he hope to gain ? He had done badly as an Anglican parson, and his record was not such as to give him prospects of advancement. On the other hand, one would not suppose that he hoped to make a better living as a Roman Catholic, at any rate in England. His next step, after conversion, in applying to be trained as a Jesuit, has been interpreted by some writers about him as showing that he thought he might have greater chances abroad. But it is doubtful whether he was so blind to his own failings as to dream that he could be successful as a Jesuit priest.

The late Thomas Seccombe, who made the first attempts at a separate life of Titus Oates, did not believe that he had any idea of the " Popish Plot " in his mind when he changed his religion. We should feel more sure on this point if we had certain knowledge of a matter to which we are coming in the next paragraph—the date on which Oates made the acquaintance of Tonge. Oates steadfastly maintained, after he became " the Saviour of the Nation," that he had only pretended to go over to the Roman Catholics in order to betray them. But this is what he would naturally say, whether it was true or not. Even if it was true, it does not prove that the idea of the monstrous perjury was already in his mind.

If, however, we could establish it as certain that Titus Oates had already, before he declared himself a Roman Catholic, met the man in whose company he was destined to work so much evil two years later, we should have exceedingly valuable evidence as to the precise extent of their villainy. If Oates's "conversion" was only part of a scheme, the whole case against them is practically proved to the full. Unfortunately certainty upon the point is unattainable.

We must now stop to introduce Oates's ally.

Ezreel (or Israel) Tonge was a man twenty-eight years older than Oates. Son of a Yorkshire Dissenting minister, he went to Oxford, where he took his B.A. degree in 1643. Having conscientious objections to fighting for—but also, apparently, against—the King, he spent some time as a schoolmaster at Chipping Norton. Five years later he returned to Oxford and took his degree as M.A. Moreover, he won the favour of the Parliamentary Visitors to the University, and secured the place of one of the ousted fellows. In 1649, the year of birth of his partner in crime, Tonge, who had married the daughter of an eminently respectable divine, Dr. Edward Simpson, obtained the living of Pluckley, near Ashford, Kent, which his father-in-law resigned to him. A Doctor of Divinity in 1656, Tonge was made fellow of the short-lived Durham College. When that closed down, he was once more a schoolmaster, in Islington. With the Restoration his political views were modified, and he became chaplain to the English garrison in Dunkirk until that fortress was returned to France. After a few years in a small living in Herefordshire, in 1666 he had just been made Rector of St. Mary Stayning when the Great Fire of London burnt him out, and he had no parish left.

Ever a rolling-stone, though not always by his own wish, Dr. Tonge spent two years as chaplain to the garrison at Tangier, returning to London to become Rector of St. Michael's, Wood Street. At last he seemed settled in life. But he was not contented with his lot. He desired, no doubt, preferment, and found his income inadequate. He took up the study of literature hostile to the Jesuits and tried, with little encouragement, to find a publisher for the results of his labours. In 1670 he

succeeded in issuing the third part of *The Mystery of Jesuitism*, a translation begun by someone else, continued by Evelyn the diarist, and now completed by Tonge. But this appears to have been his only published work until fame came to him through the Popish Plot.

We must, of course, allow the possibility of Tonge being sincere in his hatred of Rome. Of his methods of fighting against the enemy there will be something to say later. Burnet, who found him "a very mean divine," describes him as "a gardener and a chymist, and full of plots and notions," and also as "credulous and simple." Anthony Wood's picture of him is well-known—"cynical[1] and hirsute, shiftless in the world, and yet absolutely free from covetousness and, I dare say, from pride." He also mentions Tonge's fondness for chemistry, or, as he calls it, "alchymy." A less indulgent critic, naturally, is Sir Roger L'Estrange. In one place in his *Brief History of the Times* he calls Tonge a "weak man, a simple visionary bigot, and a very dreamer of dreams"; but he has much stronger words to utter about him.

L'Estrange certainly tried to prove, and we do not see why we should not believe that he thought (since it does not appear to us, as it does to some of the historians, that because Sir Roger was a red-hot Tory he was therefore an unmitigated liar!), that Oates and Tonge were known to one another before the former left England. In the *Brief History* he printed a copy of an information of August 1681, delivered to Sir Leoline Jenkins, wherein two parishioners of St. Mary Stayning certify that the two men were very well acquainted before Oates went to St. Omer, and that they had heard Tonge say at a public table that "if any person or persons would turn to the Roman religion he would have them to a place where the persons turned should receive 14*s.* a week."

An obvious means by which Titus Oates and Tonge might have been brought together was through the fact that they were both known to Sir Richard Barker. This was the man who had given Samuel Oates the living of All Saints', Hastings; and in 1675

[1] Meaning, no doubt, like a Cynic philosopher, careless how he dressed.

he had, apparently out of compassion for Tonge, assigned him a room in his own house in the Barbican. It is likely that Titus had at least kept in touch with his father's patron, in which case he would very probably meet Dr. Tonge at his house at any time from 1675 onwards.

It is natural to look for evidence on the point in the various statements of Simpson Tonge, the Doctor's son, who sprang into notoriety toward the end of 1680, when he was arrested for aspersions against the truth of his father's and Oates's revelations. Unfortunately Simpson Tonge is inconsistent and untrustworthy. (As we shall see, it is very doubtful what were his real motives in intervening in the affair.) He does say, however, at different times, that his father furnished Oates with some money, who *then* pretended himself a Papist ; and that, when he himself came down from the University in 1677, he found Oates with his father. He does not say at what date in 1677 this was, and we do not know when he came down. His story is otherwise circumstantial, however. He states that Oates was " in a very poor condition " and complaining that " he knew not what to do to get bread." He went by the name of Ambrose ; and this, or Ambrosius, we know to have been an *alias* of Oates in 1677. Dr. Tonge took Oates home, his son continues, and gave him clothes, lodging, and food, " saying he would put him into a way." The way was as follows. He must get acquaintance among the Papists. There had been many plots in England to bring in Popery, and, if he would go over among the Jesuits and observe their ways, it was possible there might be one now. " If he could make it out, it would be his preferment for ever. But, however, if he could get their names and a little acquaintance among the Jesuits, it would be an easy matter to stir up the people against Popery."

Another statement by Simpson Tonge, that the Plot was contrived by his father and Oates " when he returned a second time beyond the seas," harmonises well enough with this. The Plot was actually contrived, *i.e.* worked up from the material collected, when he (Oates) returned from St. Omer.

Though Simpson Tonge may at other times have told tales at variance with the above, there is a very plausible appearance of

truth in this one. It does not preclude the possibility of Oates having known Dr. Tonge before 1677 ; in fact, increases it. And Burnet, who cannot be accused of being in collusion with young Tonge, distinctly states that Oates on his return to England (from St. Omer) made his first discovery to Dr. Tonge, " with whom he had been long acquainted."

It is time, however, to return to the point in Oates's story when he made his profession of conversion to Rome. He quickly represented himself as anxious to penetrate further into the mysteries of the faith. He aspired to become a Jesuit like his converter, and, no doubt through his introduction, went to Father Richard Strange, Provincial of the Society in England, and asked for assistance to that end. The Provincial, who surely cannot have made enquiries into the past record of his postulant, assented ; and soon Oates was on his way to Spain, to join the English College of the Order at Valladolid. According to what Hutchinson—in his Anglican days—told Burnet, Oates and the Jesuits were always on ill terms ; they only gave him ninepence a day, wished themselves well rid of him, and sent him beyond seas.[1] But, however he may have impressed them on early acquaintance, the Jesuits could hardly have helped him to the training which he professed to desire in any other way than by sending him abroad. There were no facilities for such training in England. It was, indeed, a penal offence to go, or to send others, to be trained in the Roman Catholic religion abroad ; but that was winked at for some years past.

Oates's stay at Valladolid was brief. On October 30th, having spent about five months at the College, he was expelled. As Sir Roger L'Estrange well says of him, " he never lived anywhere after fourteen, but, whenever he quitted the place, he left the character of an infamous creature behind." Still, we do not know what the trouble was which led to this particular expulsion.

Besides what he may have acquired in reputation or learning at Valladolid—and that is not difficult to estimate—Oates probably conceived there the germ of a fine idea which he afterwards

[1] L'Estrange remarks, in his racy way, that the Society and Oates " could not cotten' but he is referring rather to the Jesuits abroad than to those in London.

developed, when he claimed to have received the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the University of Salamanca. Why Salamanca? Well, it cannot be denied that "D.D. of Salamanca" is a well-sounding title; and there was that noted University in Spain, though Oates had never seen it. We hear of an attempt by him, before he ceased to give himself out as a Roman Catholic, to procure a genuine D.D. from the Archbishop Tuam, whose reply was that there was insufficient evidence as to life and morals.

It is interesting, in connection with the Salamanca "degree," to note a passage at Lord Stafford's trial before the House of Lords in 1680. Stafford besought their lordships to ask Mr. Oates whether he was a doctor made at the Universities here or abroad. "My lords," said Titus, "if your lordships please, any matter that is before your lordships I will answer it; but I hope your lordships will not call me to account for all the actions of my life." "The Doctor," remarked the Lord High Steward, "hath never taken it upon his oath that he was a doctor. And why do you ask it?" "He is called a doctor," Stafford replied, "and I would know whether he did never declare upon his oath that he took the degree at Salamanca." Titus was not to be cornered thus. "My lords," he declared, "I am not ashamed of anything I have said or done. I own what is entered as my oath before your lordships, and am ready to answer it; but I am not bound to say what does not concern this business." The Lords evidently agreed with him, and Stafford got no answer to his question.

In November 1677 Oates was back in London again for a few weeks. To the Jesuits there he represented himself as still most anxious to proceed with his training; and, in spite of what had happened at Valladolid, he persuaded the Provincial to let h m have another chance. He was provided with some new clothes and a small sum of money and despatched on his way to the English College of the Society of Jesus at St. Omer, in Flanders. The gullibility of the London Jesuits is indeed astounding. Perhaps, too, there was something in what Hutchinson told Burnet, and they found Oates an inconvenience. But in that case they

were scarcely treating their fellows at St. Omer with much consideration in transferring the burden to them!

We can now no longer doubt that Titus was playing a double game, and, whether or not he had met Dr. Tonge earlier in the year, at the end of 1677 he had not only met him, but was in league with him to promote the ruin of the Roman Catholics. Simpson Tonge distinctly states that, when Oates returned from the Jesuits in Spain, "my father found he knew nothing of them and persuaded him to go again." Young Tonge may not be trustworthy; but it is almost necessary for the story of the Plot to believe that the general scheme had been worked out by the elder Tonge and Titus Oates before the latter started on his way to St. Omer. Titus did not, of course, know that he would discover anything of value.

Some details about this promising recruit to the Seminary of St. Omer are to be derived from two sources: one a work published in 1685 under the title of *Florus Anglo-Bavaricus*, which is a Jesuit history of St. Omer and of the persecutions endured by its staff and pupils; the other the evidence given by some of the pupils, at Oates's first trial for perjury, as printed in the tenth volume of *State Trials*. In both cases the testimony is hostile. Friendly testimony on the subject, however, is naturally non-existent.

The picture of Oates in the *Florus* represents him as abject and cringing towards his superiors, arrogant towards the other novices who were all his juniors, prompt to use abusive language to any he regarded as enemies, but very impatient of such language himself. He was given to boasting what he had suffered for the Faith and what an ample fortune he had sacrificed for God's sake, while all the time he neglected his religious duties and looked after his comforts. He reviled the Royal Family of England, saying now that the Stuarts were bastards, now that they were tyrants. Hearing of the death of an infant son of the Duke of York, he said he was no more grieved than if the Duke's dog had died. When lectured for his bad behaviour, he would throw himself at the Fathers' feet, humbly pleading that the evil nature which he had inherited from childhood could not be changed at once, and begging with tears not to be sent away.

The companion picture presented by Oates's fellow-novices, at the first trial at the King's Bench in 1685, harmonises well with the above, but adds lighter details. William Conway remembered a peculiar amusement of the scholars of St. Omer in Mid-Lent, which they called " Sawing of the witch " ; and he was one of those who broke a pan about Oates's head for recreation. The witness Haggerstone, who, as he said, " had the honour to be of the same bench with the Doctor of Salamanca," recalled that he used to chew tobacco very much, which was forbidden ; and also that he heard him preach a pleasant sermon (for he would undertake sometimes to preach) in which he said that Charles II. halted betwixt two opinions, and a stream of Popery went between his legs. James Doddington recollected him well for his conversation and " canting stories " after meals and at recreation-time, for his ridiculous actions, and for his falling out with everyone at the college. Anthony Turberville said that, with his ridiculous actions and pretty jests, Oates at St. Omer was like a silly person that used to make sport. Once he had seen a little boy in the college beat him up and down with a fox's tail. All the same, he was very abusive to his fellow-collegians.

At this same trial both Lord Gerard of Bromley and Haggerstone testified that Oates was known at St. Omer as Sampson Lucy and as Titus Ambrosius. " He had twenty other names," added Haggerstone. The two mentioned, and particularly the latter, seem to have been usual.

Lord Gerard remembered the " peculiar cant in his tone which all men know who have ever conversed with him." With regard to his personal appearance, Oates used to wear a darker periwig at St. Omer than that for which he later became noted.

However Oates fared in other ways at St. Omer, he certainly gained one piece of information which his evil mind saw how to turn to profit ; though, had he learnt a little more, he would have been able to make from it an even better peg on which to hang his lies. On April 24th,[1] 1678, there was held in London the triennial Congregation, whereat the Provincial and forty senior members of the English Province, like the other Jesuit

[1] Old Style, corresponding with May 4th in the style already adopted on the Continent.

Provinces, met to select a Proctor to go to Rome and discuss the Society's affairs. The novices at St. Omer must have known about this Congregation, or " Consult " ; for, though their Rector, Richard Ashby, was unable through illness to cross over to England to take part in it, several others of the St. Omer Fathers went. What construction Oates put upon this innocent business will appear in due course.

There was one circumstance, however, which he did not know concerning the Consult, namely the exact place where it was held. As a matter of fact, this was a room in St. James's Palace, by invitation of the Duke of York. Naturally the place was kept a profound secret, for the sake of the Duke and his co-religionists alike ; and it is noteworthy that never during the whole agitation of the Popish Plot did the secret come out. Had it done so, the course of history might have been considerably altered.

Two months after the Consult Oates's connection with the Jesuit college ended. When the new Provincial in London Thomas Whitebread—called by the *Florus Anglo-Bavaricus* Thomas Harcourt, and also known as White—came to St. Omer on a visit, he was approached with regard to the propriety of expelling Oates. Whitebread agreed, and Oates was told to get ready to go. In vain he wheedled, abased himself, and promised serious reformation this time. Whitebread was obdurate, and on June 23rd, 1678, St. Omer saw the last of its terrible novice. But it was to hear a great deal more of him, and Whitebread in particular was to suffer dearly for his share in the expulsion. Meanwhile he certainly treated him generously; for he gave him, as he testified at the Old Bailey a year later, a good suit of clothes, a periwig, and £4 in his purse, which Oates promised to repay after the sale of a good library he had in London—and naturally did not repay.

On June 27th Oates was once more in London. He did not at once throw off the mask, but went to some of the Jesuits—the *Florus* mentioned Fathers Waring, Ireland, and Fenwick—made up to them, and begged money from them. At the same time, however, according to this work, he met in secret with Tonge, with Digby, a bankrupt merchant who was bent on getting

money somehow, and with the famous "Colonel" Blood,[1] and with them discussed the working up of a conspiracy against the Roman Catholics.

Oates was certainly in needy circumstances when he came back to London. L'Estrange says that he was "not worth a Brumigen-groat to spunge for a dish of coffee." There is other evidence for this than the statements of the *Florus* and L'Estrange. At Lord Castlemaine's trial in 1680, Hutchinson, *alias* Berry, who had converted Oates to Roman Catholicism, and whom, in Castlemaine's words, "Mr. Oates has since converted to be a Protestant," bore witness that before the Plot Oates had been employed by him in writing certain things against the corruption of the Church of Rome. "It is a hard thing, Mr. Berry," Oates had said to him, "for a man to want bread." Whereupon he had given him ten shillings.

Similarly William Smith relates how Oates, "skulking about the Town in a secular habit" after his return from St. Omer, was very intimate with their common friend Medburne, who was instrumental in obtaining for him some assistance from persons of quality among the Roman Catholics. He once told Medburne that he had not eaten a bit of bread for three days. In compassion Medburne and Smith took him to the Cock, in the Haymarket, and gave him food, drink, and money.

L'Estrange says that on his first return to London Oates "lay lurching up and down the Town," at one while in Drury Lane, at another with Dr. Tonge—does he mean at Tonge's expense?—at the Flying Horse in King Street, Westminster. Simpson Tonge names, among the places at which his father and Oates met (for they seldom kept one place), the Golden Horseshoe in the Strand, York Buildings, and the Bull in Great Queen Street. As the conspiracy progressed, Oates went to live at the house of a bell-founder named Lambert, in Vauxhall, so as to be near Tonge at Sir Richard Barker's. At Lambert's, which afterwards came to be known as "the Plot-House," the monstrous

[1] I said in my *Rogues and Scoundrels* that Blood "seems to have taken no part in the hideous persecution of Romanists"; but we certainly get at least mention of his name in connection with the Popish Plot—and L'Estrange couples his name with Tonge's in "the Fire of London Plot" (1676).

inventions of Oates and Tonge were put into shape for revelation to the world.

The task of answering the question as to the prime responsibility for the tale of the Popish Plot is exceedingly difficult, and conflicting theories have been put forward, from the time of L'Estrange downwards, without any one of them being able to command the general support of the historians. As always, religious and political bias has interfered to disturb the calm discrimination necessary to the consideration of the problem.

The present writer cannot at all agree with those who decry the value of the contribution made to the history of the Plot by Sir Roger L'Estrange. The Bloodhound of the Press may have been, let us say, about half as bad as his enemies make out—vindictive, venal, unscrupulous, and a fit tool for the dirty work which he was called upon to do. But he was an extraordinarily able man, and wielded a vigorous and brilliant pen. By his researches and his writings, particularly in his task of "dressing up Oates for the pillory," he deserved well of his country. It must be admitted that he was not content with a good cause, but doctored the evidence to support it. That does not, however, oblige us to look upon the whole body of the evidence which he adduced (and it is very large) as doctored.

L'Estrange's theory is that Dr. Tonge was the real originator of the conspiracy which we call by the misleading name of the Popish Plot. Tonge, he says, "was the *Dominus Fac Totum*, Oates but the tool he wrought withall." Oates was neither the inventor of the Plot, nor the author of the narrative in which he professed to reveal it, "any further than as he followed Dr. Tonge's directions, swore to Dr. Tonge's words, and wrote after Dr. Tonge's copy. So that Tonge is the Oracle we are to consult for the Revelations of Titus." But he goes on (lest we should give too much credit to Tonge) to assert that "that which has passed so many years[1] for Oates's plot will be found no more at last than a transcript of Tonge's; as Tonge's was, effectually, of Habernfeld's."

[1] He was writing in 1687. He claims that he himself, from the first moment of the Plot coming into the world, looked upon it as a conspiracy in disguise.

L'Estrange makes out a very good case indeed for the source of Tonge's inspiration being the old "Popish Plot" story of Andreas de Habernfeld in 1640, and he sets out parallel passages showing the remarkable similarities. *Rome's Masterpiece*, the alleged history of the old Plot, was published by Prynne in 1643. Now, in 1678 there was to appear a new edition called *The Grand Designs of the Papists in the Reign of our Late Sovereign Charles the 1st, and now Carry'd on against his Present Majesty, his Government, and the Protestant Succession*, in which L'Estrange suspected that Tonge had a hand, because of the likeness in it to a work which, some time before the broaching of the new Plot, Ezreel Tonge had brought to him, as Surveyor of the Press, vainly asking for a license. This work, *The Royal Martyr*, Tonge had written as early as 1672, according to L'Estrange, and kept by him in manuscript until he should be able to publish it. He showed Oates several treatises, "his *Royal Martyr* being, if not the only nor chief, yet not the least incentive to Oates's adventures among the Jesuits."

In an amusing passage L'Estrange sums up his theory of the conspiracy. Tonge was the very soul of Oates's clay, he says.

> "It was Tonge that set him at work, and Tonge that paid him his wages. Tonge sends him abroad to discover a plot; nay, and he tells him what kind of plot he is to discover too. Oates makes a step over the water; lays his nose to the train; follows the scent, and comes back again with a duck in his mouth; but without his master's blessing and assistance the *Silly Curr* knows not what in the world to do with it. In this posture we must imagine Oates to stand for a matter of two months, wagging his tail and waiting with a conspiracy betwixt his teeth, till at length the Doctor comes and takes it of him, and so dresses it up into a narrative. Oates furnishes names, dates, places; Tonge finds matter to them, ranges so many particulars into so many treasons, dissects the whole into so many articles. Oates kisses the Four Evangelists upon 'em[1]; and this is the very history of the Pretended Plot."

[1] "The cover of the Four Evangelists," he says elsewhere, "never had fouler lips laid to't than those of the King's witnesses.

As to the notion that there was someone much more important behind Tonge, L'Estrange holds that "the Popish Plot was made a cover to a Republican conspiracy," and that "the intent of the *real* plot was that the True-Protestants were to kill the King and the Papists to be hanged for it." But he does not accuse the leader of the True-Protestants, *i.e.* the Earl of Shaftesbury, with directly inspiring Tonge. He and his cabal "did only refine upon and improve materials that were brought nearly to their hands." And, again, "Tonge unkennelled the fox; Shaftesbury, the master of the bloodhounds, governed the chase." In other words, the Earl took advantage of the Plot to further his own ends.

Charles II., whose perspicacity was seldom at fault, seems to have gone further than L'Estrange. According to Burnet, who was at the time a chaplain to the King and had many interviews with him in Will Chiffinch's apartments during the December following the Revelations of Titus, he considered that Shaftesbury was actually behind the Plot. But Burnet himself thought that "the many gross things" in Oates's narrative showed that there was no abler head than Oates or Tonge in the framing of it. Besides, Oates's first story so protected the Duke of York and the King's ministers that Shaftesbury, who hated all these more than Popery, can have had no hand in it.

On the whole, the probability appears to be that Tonge, who, as we have seen, had for years been under the obsession of the criminal iniquities of Rome, was acting independently when he came across Titus Oates, and saw in him a fitting collaboration in his labours; that Oates agreed to collect evidence to support Tonge's theories; and that together they concocted their charges, without as yet having the backing of any higher authority. Of course they had the expectation of substantial gain through their alleged discoveries, and they may even have had promises of support from above. After the story had been told, support was abundantly forthcoming, and Shaftesbury and his friends took command of the situation.

It is time now to come to the revelations themselves, the result of the meetings in Oates's Vauxhall lodgings. According to

Simpson Tonge, Oates called one day on his father in the Barbican and brought to him a manuscript embodying his discoveries. Dr. Tonge advised him to rewrite it in Greek characters, so that none but themselves might be privy to it, and this was accordingly done.[1] On August 11th Oates called again, in the Doctor's absence, and hid his manuscript under the wainscot at the farther end of Sir Richard Barker's gallery, near Tonge's chamber-door; or, according to another account, pushed it under the door of Tonge's room. Here the Doctor found it upon his return. It contained the famous Forty-three Articles, afterwards to be expanded into eighty-one, which drove a credulous populace to frenzy.

## II

What follows below is a summary of the Articles. The whole eighty-one are given (with the omission of a few which are of minor importance), so that we shall not have to break off twice to insert a list; but it must be understood that only forty-three were originally put forward.

I. and II. The Jesuits, Strange, Keynes, Langworth, Fenwick, and Harcourt, wrote a treasonable letter to an Irish Jesuit, Suiman (whom Oates later calls Hierom Swiman), in Madrid, giving Oates £10 to carry it to him. On his way, at Burgos, Oates opened the letter and found it to be about a plot they had contrived in Scotland for a rebellion of the Presbyterians against the Episcopal Government. They had employed three men, Wright, Morgan, and Ireland, in the guise of Presbyterians, to stir up the disaffected Scots and persuade them that there was no relief but by the sword. They said in the letter that they had got an interest in the Duke; but they would deal with him as they thought fit. They were resolved to use all means to weaken the King's interest.

III. and IV. The Jesuits of St. Omer sent a mission of twelve

[1] The point of this is not obvious, as others could read Greek characters besides the conspirators; but the story is as told by Simpson Tonge.

to Spain, eight to Valladolid and four to Madrid, to study philosophy and divinity, which missioners were obliged, in Spain, to renounce their allegiance to King Charles, in Oates's hearing. Daniel Armstrong, minister of the College at Valladolid, preached in a sermon, also in Oates's hearing, that the oath to Charles was heretical, anti-Christian, and devilish, and that Charles was a bastard, son of a black Scotchman, not of Charles I. The same Armstrong brought letters from St. Omer, to the effect that the Fathers in London had procured Bedingfield to be the Duke of York's confessor, but if they saw that H.R.H. did not answer their expectations they would dispose of him as they hoped to dispose of his brother within a year. These letters, which Oates himself saw at Valladolid, were signed by Ashby the rector, Richard and Charles Peters, and Nevill.

V. Suiman wrote to Valladolid that Charles was poisoned, to the great joy of the English Fathers, and that they would serve James so if he did not give them good assurance of the bringing in of the Catholic religion. Oates saw this letter.

VI. and VII. Oates saw, in Suiman's chamber in Madrid in August 1677, letters from Strange, Grey, and Keynes, saying that they were using all diligence to procure someone to despatch the King; and a later letter from the same Jesuits, with the addition of Langworth, Fenwick, Ireland, and Harcourt, regretting that "their man William, being fainthearted, could not do it then, though he had £1,500 promised him for his pains."

VIII. Oates brought to Strange a letter from Valladolid, written by the Jesuit Provincial in New Castille, promising Strange and Keynes, if the King's death could be effected, £10,000 for their pains.

IX. and X. Oates, early in December 1677, carried a letter from Strange and a number of other Fathers in London to Ashby at St. Omer, stating that Charles was altogether given to his pleasures, and that they intended to procure someone to stab him, or else one of his physicians to poison him. For this work they had £10,000 lodged in London, sent by Father Leshee (Père de la Chaise), Jesuit confessor to the French King. Oates saw and read this letter; and he was told to carry an enclosure

from it to La Chaise himself in Paris, thanking him for his care for propagating the Catholic religion.

XI. Later letters were sent by Strange and others in London to St. Omer, enclosing letters to La Chaise, in which he was informed of intended risings in Scotland and Ireland.[1] Ashby informed Oates of this on his return from Paris.

XII. Ashby also informed Oates, on Christmas Eve, 1677, of a letter which stated that the General of the Society in Rome had appointed White, *alias* Whitebread, Provincial in the place of Strange, and that Whitebread had ordered Conyers to preach on St. Thomas of Canterbury's Day against the oaths of allegiance and supremacy.

XIII. A few days later Ashby read to Oates a letter in which Whitebread, Strange, and numerous other London Jesuits ordered him to write to La Chaise how they had met together to contrive the advancement of the design for the happy disposal of the King and, if he should not answer their expectations, the Duke.

XV. and XVI. indicate that the London Jesuits endeavoured to prejudice Charles in Spain and embroil the relations of the two countries ; and that when letters to this end were sent *via* St. Omer (and of course seen by Oates) two of the Jesuits there, Nevill and Fermor, said that " they would not let this black bastard go to his grave in peace, for that he had cheated them so often, and now they were resolved to be served so no more." " What if the Duke should prove slippery ? " Oates represents himself as asking. " His passport is ready whenever he shall appear to fail us," was the reply.

XVII. concerns the London Jesuits' endeavours to prejudice Charles with the Emperor.

XVIII. concerns letters from Peter Talbot, Archbishop of Dublin, about preparations for a rising in Ireland.

XIX. Oates at St. Omer read a letter to Ashby from Whitebread, giving a burlesque account of the opening of Parliament, in contempt of the King and both Houses ; and telling how Pickering had failed to shoot Charles in St. James's Park through the

[1] The details are much the same as those in Oates's first examination before the Privy Council and the " 40,000 black bills " are mentioned (see p. 48).

flint of his pistol being loose. " If he had done it and had suffered, he should have had 30,000 masses said for the health of his soul."

XX. is an accusation against Charles Peters, prefect of the sodality at St. Omer, of aspersing the legitimacy of Charles I.

XXI. and XXII. describe the interest of the London Jesuits in risings in Ireland and in Scotland.

XXIII. On February 10th, N.S., Oates wrote by direction of the Fathers of St. Omer, to those in London, that it was now apparent that the Catholic religion was to be brought in in the same way that they had used in the destruction of Charles I. Let the English Fathers therefore prosecute their design in taking away the King, and, if the Duke should not comply with them, despatch him too.

XXIV. Oates saw an answer to the foregoing letter, in which the London Jesuits said that they found the Duke, though a good Catholic, with a tender affection to the King. If they should at once intimate their designs to him, they might not only be frustrated, but might also lose his favour.

XXVI. Oates saw a letter from Whitebread to Ashby, describing how " Honest William " (the name by which John Grove is represented as passing) and Pickering failed several days in the month of March to assassinate the King. For this William was chidden, and Pickering had twenty lashes.

XXVII. In a letter from London to St. Omer some information was given about Irish affairs, and a Consult upon them was to be held in London. Oates was to go to this as " messenger from Father to Father."

XXVIII. Oates relates how he accompanied the representatives of St. Omer (who did not include Father Ashby, as he was ill with gout) to the Consult in London, and how fifty Jesuits met at the White Horse Tavern, in the Strand. At this Consult, he says, he was " present to attend the consulters, and delivered their concerns from company to company; and then a little after they left the White Horse Tavern and divided themselves into several clubs or companies; . . . all of which . . . did contrive the death of the King. In order to which, there were papers sent from company to company, which the deponent

carried, containing the opinions of the timing their business, and the manner how it was to be done; and, within three or four days after, the deponent went to St. Omer with the Fathers that came from that side of the water."

[This, of course, is the Provincial Congregation of April 24th —May 4th, N.S.—of which we have heard above, p. 30. Oates gave to the Privy Council on September 29th the following as those present at the Consult: Sir Thomas Preston, Father Marsh, Rector of Ghent, Father Williams, Rector of Watten, Sir John Warner at Watten, Sir Robert Brett, Ed. Nevill, himself, Thomas White the Provincial, Harcourt " at Mrs. Carter's in Drury Lane," Lane, Keynes, Father Carey, Basil Langworth, Father Ireland, Fenwick, another Harcourt, Micho, Jennison, Richard Peters, Jo. Peters, and W. Morgan. Oates, as we know, was not present. We do not know whether his list of names is founded on any actual information. In some cases, such as those of Preston and Warner, he was proved to have lied.]

XXIX. quotes alleged disloyal remarks by Whitebread, visiting St. Omer in June, to Ashby and Oates about " the fool at Whitehall," and how, if the Duke should follow in his brother's footsteps, his passport was made to lay him to bed.

XXX. Whitebread got Oates to undertake to poison or assassinate the author of *Jesuit Morals* (Tonge), promising him £50.

XXXI. describes Oates's return to England, travelling with four Jesuits from Calais. The chief interest in this Article is that Oates pretends that, on leaving St. Omer, he was promised £80 for services done for the Society in Spain and elsewhere! [For one turned out of both Valladolid and St. Omer this is mighty good.]

XXXII. In July Ashby came to town with instructions from Whitebread to treat with Sir George Wakeman to poison the King, for which he should have £10,000.

XXXIII. is a very long article, in which Ashby is made to confide to Oates in London in July all about the Great Fire of 1666, and how the Jesuits had got £14,000 for it, including

diamonds, the plunder of jewellers' shops, which were carried away to St. Omer and sold for £3,500.

XXXVII. Oates saw a letter, dated July 22nd, in which Whitebread authorised Fenwick to raise the bribe to Sir George Wakeman to £15,000.

XL. concerns a letter of August 15th, from St. Omer, to Fenwick, which Oates saw. It contained some ciphers, the purport being that Westminster must be burnt down. If poison would not take the King away, fire should.

XLI. concerns the money in the hands of the Jesuits in England —" all highly to the damage of the kingdom."

XLIV. Oates has several times been told what secrets of the King's the Jesuits can purchase by money and send over to La Chaise. The agent is one Smith, who daily lurks about Whitehall and Westminster Hall, and pays fees to clerks for information. " One Coleman, formerly secretary to Her Royal Highness, doth assist this Smith with private intelligence, as John Keynes, Jesuit, and this Smith have told the deponent several times in the months of July and August."

XLVI. Letters arrive on August 9th from St. Omer, expressing joy that Wakeman has consented to " attempt the business " for £15,000. Pickering and Honest William, however, are not to desist.

XLVII. Oates was offered by Langworth and others of the Society £10 to kill " one William Berry, now a secular priest, who had formerly been a Jesuit." Berry had written a paper vindicating the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. [This latter statement was doubtless correct, Hutchinson, *alias* Berry, being on the path of conversion to the Church of England.]

XLVIII. contains allegations of disloyal talk about the King by Fenwick and Keynes.

XLIX. Oates was told by John Grove how the fire of Southwark in 1676 was caused by him and three Irishmen, who were procured by Dr. Fogarty. The Jesuits got at least £2,000 by this fire.

L. Oates was told by Fenwick on August 11th that if he lived till Christmas he should see a good change of things ; either

that "48 [a cipher for the King, born in 1630], should be taken from the world, or the world (especially the little he was concerned in!) should be taken from him; and one that was a Catholic should play such a game as never was played since the Conquest." Who was this Catholic? asked Oates, and was told that it was the Duke of York.

LI. is about treasonable talk between Keynes and another Jesuit before Oates; and LII. concerns Keynes and a design against the King.

LIII. gives more about the Smith mentioned in XLIV. as sending intelligence abroad.

LIV. accuses the members of the club in Fuller's Rents of being employed by the Jesuits to incite the people of London against the House of Commons and also against the bishops. Among the members of the club named are Matthew Medburne and William Smith, schoolmaster at Islington.

LVII. states that Oates was by accident at a sermon preached by Keynes to the effect that heretical princes might lawfully be deposed.

LX. is a long article, full of accusations against a number of priests, all Benedictines except Keynes, of plots to murder "48." Two of the most interesting passages, illustrative of the writer's style, are:

(1) The saving of Charles in the flight from Worcester, Oates was told by the prior and sub-prior of the Benedictines, was "the worst day's work that ever simple Jack Huddlestone did in all his life." Now it was their business to get the Stuarts out of the way.

(2) Keynes told Oates that the Duke of York was not the strength of their trust. "When they had destroyed the King, they had a list of 20,000 Catholics in London that would rise in twenty-four hours' time and less; and if James did not comply with them, to pot he must go also."

LXI. implicates the Dominicans and Carmelites in the Plot, Oates having been used to convey messages to them from the Jesuits.

LXII. contains tales about the schemes against "48" at

Windsor. Conyers told Oates that " he would see His Worship and talk with him in some other language than Tormentilio." What did he mean? asked Oates. " If the shirt on my back should know," Conyers replied, " I would burn it."

LXIII. and LXIV. are about a plot to kill the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Peter Talbot and Dr. Fogarty being in it. Fogarty had also hired four Irish ruffians to " mind the King's postures at Windsor." In LXVI. it is stated that money was sent to these four ruffians, in the name of the Provincial and whole Society of the Jesuits in London.

LXVII. accuses Bedingfield, the Duke's confessor, of having received traitorous letters. [We shall see how Oates shortly produced some of these letters !]

LXVIII. Conyers, on August 22nd, showed Oates the knife that was to kill the King.

LXIX. and LXX. reveal a plan for burning London with the aid of " Tewxbury mustard-balls," *i.e.* fire-balls.

LXXVII. tells of the assault made on Oates by Whitebread, the sixty-year-old Provincial. Calling on him by request on the morning of September 4th, he was asked with what face he could look on him, since he had played them such a treacherous trick ; and then Whitebread " struck him three blows with his stick and a box on his ear." He showed Oates a letter from Bedingfield, by which it appeared the Duke had told him the King knew of the plot. No one but Oates could have betrayed it ; but Whitebread would pardon him if he revealed the name of the person who had gone to the King. He was then told to get ready to go beyond seas within fourteen days. He must proceed to St. Omer and there await orders.

In LXXIX. Oates relates that, on the night of September 6th, he overheard at the Provincial's door Whitebread and some others planning how to have him taken to the other side of the water, so that they might torment him until he told who it was had been with the King and had revealed the business—whereat Oates had run away.

LXXX. describes an attempt made to assassinate Oates by a Jesuit agent on the night of September 7th ; and LXXXI. what

he suspected to be an attempt to "trepan" him by another Papist next day.

. . . . . .

Such was the stupendous list, which Oates afterwards published in his *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy*, of the crimes he alleged against the Roman Catholics, and in particular the Jesuits. It cannot be said of Oates's Articles what Dryden said of the story of the Plot in general, "Some truth there was, but dashed and brewed with lies." Taken as a whole, they present the most colossal lie the world has ever seen. It required indeed a public willing to be deceived, if it could be deceived by such an invention.

The most audacious part of it, however, was what stupidity perhaps could not be expected to discredit—the rôle assigned by Oates to himself in the conspiracy. Oates hand-in-glove with Rectors and Provincials, Oates the friend and confidant of the leading plotters, the man to whom they read the most compromising letters, to whom they entrusted the most incriminating documents and messages, to whom they told the guilty secrets of their past and showed the weapons with which they intended to commit their future crimes; this preposterous figure was not preposterous to them. They could believe in Oates's picture of himself because he told them other things which they wanted to believe.

Dr. Tonge made a copy of the Forty-three Articles in his own hand, possibly improving them in places. It now remained to introduce them to the notice of the King, and for this purpose Tonge called in the assistance of Christopher Kirkby, a Lancashire gentleman, whom Charles employed in his chemical laboratory at Whitehall, and whose acquaintance Tonge had no doubt made through his own interest in chemistry. Kirkby was shown the articles on August 12th, but was not yet introduced to Oates. He found the matter serious and promised to approach the King. The next day he waylaid him as he was sauntering in St. James's Park, and handed him a note, begging for an interview. Charles asked him his business, and to his astonishment was told that he, Charles, might be shot at any moment, even now in the course of his walk. He made an appointment to see Kirkby again a

little later in Whitehall Palace, and there he asked for particulars. Kirkby told him how Pickering and Grove were on the watch for him with their guns, and how, if they should not succeed, Sir George Wakeman was to poison him.

Charles was never deficient in courage, and still less in common sense. But he agreed to see the man from whom Kirkby had received his information ; and the same evening he gave a hearing to Tonge. The last-named brought with him his copy of the Forty-three Articles, begging for the greatest secrecy until the whole plot should be discovered. As Charles afterwards told Burnet, he did not know what to make of these revelations. " Among so many particulars he did not know but there might be some truth." He exhibited no undue concern, however. He had arranged to go to Windsor the next day, and he did not alter his plans. He ordered Tonge to take his story to the Lord Treasurer. But he showed enough interest to ask where the discovery had been made.

Tonge told his tale of finding the papers in Sir Richard Barker's house, and added that he thought the writer to be a man who had talked with him sometimes about the matters contained in the papers. He was very disingenuous as to his acquaintance with Oates ; and, if there is anyone who holds that Tonge was originally sincere in his belief in the real existence of a Popish Plot, it must be a considerable puzzle for him to explain the man's lies to the King and, the next day, to the Lord Treasurer.

Charles went off to Windsor, while Danby took over the task of dealing with Tonge. He could get very little satisfaction out of him ; and Tonge would not produce the author of the Articles nor even reveal his name. Pickering and Grove he professed to be able to trace, but failed to do so.

Nevertheless, Danby was sufficiently affected, after a couple of interviews, to go to Windsor and press the King for the issue of warrants to arrest the would-be assassins. Charles declined, and insisted that no one, not even the Duke of York, should be informed of the matter. Danby went back, to be deceived by two preposterous tales from Tonge, leading him to expect to catch Pickering and Grove—who, of course, did not appear.

It became clear to the conspirators that something must be done to give credit to their inventions. While Tonge was endeavouring to handle the Lord Treasurer, Oates was in his retreat in Vauxhall, preparing more material. The fruit of his labours was ready on August 30th, when Tonge announced that if someone were sent to the post office at Windsor a packet of letters would be found addressed to Thomas Bedingfield, a Jesuit, confessor to the Duke of York. Undeterred by the previous deceptions, Danby hastened to Windsor and found that the packet had actually come to the post office, that Bedingfield had by chance called there to enquire for letters, that he had opened the packet, and that he had taken the letters, five in number, and shown them to the Duke, who took them to the King.

These "Windsor letters," as they were often called, were a most manifest and clumsy forgery—"so rank a cheat," rightly says L'Estrange, "that the accusers never durst bring them in as evidence." Ostensibly they were from Roman Catholic priests, and hinted in no uncertain way at grave treason. But they were not in the priests' handwritings. Three of them, according to L'Estrange, were undeniably the handwriting of Oates and Tonge; elsewhere he says they were all in the same writing. Anyhow, they all bore a family resemblance, and were all misspelt, even to the names of the professed writers, and unpunctuated.

The stroke had failed. The King was confirmed in his opinion that there was no Plot at all, and Danby refused to see Tonge. The chief result of the appearance of the "Windsor letters" was to bring it to the knowledge of the Duke of York that something was on foot against the Roman Catholics. He demanded of his brother an enquiry by the Privy Council. Seccombe talks of James's "usual ineptitude" in so doing; and Mr. John Pollock speaks of his "usual want of tact." But, after all, a base wrong had been done, and the Duke was entitled to ask justice for his co-religionists. That they did not get it, that the Privy Council enquiry brought ruin on them, and nearly on him too, was not his fault. In the circumstances, it might have been better for

them all had he quietly ignored the wrong done. If guilty of treasonable thoughts he would no doubt have done so. But, even if he had held his peace, Oates and Tonge would have continued their machinations, and sooner or later an enquiry must have come.

Oates cannot but have been much disappointed over the failure of the " Windsor letters " ; but his inventive powers were unimpaired. He had remained in seclusion since Kirkby and Tonge had first approached the King, and was not even seen by Kirkby until September 2nd. Two days later, however, Kirkby saw him again and, we must suppose, was duly affected by his tale how he had called upon Father Thomas Whitebread, Provincial of the Jesuits, and had been received by him with reproaches, nay, with blows, for having betrayed them. L'Estrange amusingly calls this " the frightful assault and battery of Old Bully Whitebread upon the body of Titus Oates." The whole thing was doubtless a pure figment. Oates may have been meeting with the Jesuits down to September 1678, but hardly if they had got wind of his treachery.

On September 6th the conspirators took a new step. Hitherto they had been content with imparting their evidence to the King and Lord Treasurer Danby. Now Oates, Tonge, and Kirkby went to the office of a Westminster justice of the peace, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, taking with them a copy of the Forty-three Articles. This was not given to Godfrey to read, but he was told that the King had already a copy and that it contained matters of treason, etc. Oates swore to the truth of the Articles, the others witnessed the oath, and the three departed.

It is generally supposed—and no other hypothesis seems necessary—that it was discontent at the manner in which Charles had treated his revelations that prompted Oates to go to Godfrey. If, as might be feared from the King's attitude, there was any danger of the Articles presented to him being suppressed, at any rate there was the oath before a justice of the peace as to their existence.

Now there came a pause in the outward activities of the conspirators, which was utilised by Oates and Tonge in putting into

shape some more Articles, bringing the total number up to the eighty-one which we have seen above.

On September 26th Tonge paid a visit to Burnet with one of the new stories, telling him of " strange designs against the King's person, and that Conyers, a Benedictine, had undertaken to kill him with a poniard." Burnet, afraid that if he kept this to himself he might be held guilty of misprision of treason, sent his friend Dr. William Lloyd to the office of the Secretary of State. Here Lloyd was told that Tonge had preceded him, and it was jokingly suggested that the Doctor was endeavouring to get himself made Dean.

However, the following day, the summons at length came for Tonge and Oates to appear before the Privy Council on the morrow. The test was at hand. Oates hastened to secure himself still further before he went. Early on the 28th he paid a second visit to Sir Edmund Godfrey with two copies of the Eighty-one Articles, to the truth of which he swore, and, leaving one copy with him, went off to the Council. Tonge was received first and testified, as we have heard, very incorrectly to his friend's connection with the Navy. Oates himself, being introduced, had much to say. Notes of the Council meeting are still preserved in the Record Office, made by Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State, in his difficult and sometimes indecipherable handwriting.

Oates's evidence was mostly a repetition of the Articles. There was to have been a rebellion in Scotland, as he had discovered by opening letters which he had carried to Spain ; and twelve Jesuits (he had formerly said three) had been sent over, under colour of being Nonconformists. He would have been one of these, but was sick. He told again of the 40,000 " black bills " for Ireland, where a rising was expected of 35,000 men, to let in the French King. The Lord-Lieutenant, Ormonde, was to be murdered by four Irish Jesuits. Oliva, General of the Society, had promised 800,000 crowns ; and already £11,000 had been sent from Spain to the priests in London for the war in Ireland, he himself having been present at the paying of the money.

As for England, his tales were much the same as before, including the planning, at the famous Consult, of the King's murder. Pickering and Grove had " haunted " His Majesty in St. James's Park in June and July ; and when he went to Windsor Conyers undertook, aided by four Irish priests, to stab him. Conyers had shown Oates the dagger he had bought for the purpose, while Pickering and Grove showed him a pistol and some silver bullets, which Grove would have " champed "—so as to make the wound more deadly ! If these attempts failed, there was Sir George Wakeman with his poison. The £5,000 sent to Wakeman on account, Oates now said, was conveyed through the hands of Coleman, the Duchess's secretary.

The Jesuits, he continued, had tried to send out emissaries over England to incense the people against the King. He knew some of them, and also a club in Fuller's Rents which was sending from house to house to decry Parliament—" the Devil's representatives "—and the King—" who was grown so negligent that he minded nothing but . . ." His language appears to have been stronger here than in the Articles ; more of the natural Oates, in fact.

Williamson notes, after Tonge's examination, " all encouragement possible to be given to Mr. Tonge." He has no similar note with regard to Oates. But it is evident that the Council were impressed by the glib liar. They granted him the warrants for which he asked, to arrest those whom he accused, and, as soon as the Council rose, he set out personally with an escort to round up the Jesuit Fathers and convey them to Newgate.

The next afternoon, though it was a Sunday—and Michaelmas Day—he was again before the Council. He told, with regard to Wakeman, how he was himself present at the " consult " where the physician's readiness to poison the King was reported. He had heard Dr. Fogarty, at the Benedictine convent behind the Savoy, tell of his provision of Irish assassins for the King's murder. He charged Whitebread with talking to him in June of the passport waiting for the Duke of York if he did not comply with their schemes ; and about Fenwick he had much the same tale as in his fiftieth Article, that he prophesied " such a game

would be played before Christmas as never was played before" —by the Duke.

Oates now gave to the Council his story of the assault upon him by Whitebread; how he was struck by him and accused of treachery, but was promised pardon if he would tell through whom he had acquainted the King, so that the Society might kill him.

Probably in answer to a question as to the exact reason of his own presence in England now, Oates said it was for no other purpose but to kill Tonge.

Williamson does not record some slips by Oates, which, in conjunction with the patent fraud of the "Windsor letters," made the King sure of the falsity of the charges. He wrongly described the personal appearance of Don John of Austria, whom he implicated in the Plot; and he made Père de la Chaise, in his presence, pay out the £10,000 for Charles's murder, at the Jesuits' house near the Louvre in Paris, when the Jesuits had no house near the Louvre.

The King roundly declared him "a most lying knave." But unhappily it was not only the King with whom Oates had to deal. The man's shiftiness and unwillingness to produce what might really be called evidence, as apart from assertions, apparently did not affect the Council so much as his spate of words. He was sent out again that night, after a long sitting, to continue his drive for Jesuits, including Father Whitebread, who was at the Spanish Embassy. Into this they broke to seize him, with the result that the Ambassador made a vigorous protest.[1]

Among the warrants with which Oates was armed was one for the Duchess of York's secretary, whom we have seen mentioned in the Articles and also at Oates's first examination before the Council. Coleman had vanished from his house, in circumstances to be told later; but there was a warrant also for the seizure of his papers, which was duly executed, and some letters were

[1] "Before dawn," writes Mr. Pollock, "most of the Jesuits of eminence in London lay in gaol" It is curious, this being so, that Mr. Pollock, and other historians too, should believe that twelve days later three Jesuits, not altogether obscure men, were not only at liberty in London, but also in a position to carry out the murder of Sir Edmund Godfrey.

discovered, in one drawer under a table, according to Burnet, or, according to others, in a deal box behind the chimney.

The Council's examination of Oates and the Jesuit-drive continued on September 30th, though Oates was now physically very weary; but the most important event that day was the voluntary surrender of Coleman, unaware that he had left anything compromising among the papers at his house. When, however, they came to be examined by the Council next day, there was found to be matter in them sufficiently serious to send Coleman a prisoner to Newgate. On his appearance before the Council he was confronted by Oates, who, however, was not yet prepared with a full story as far as Coleman was concerned and would not identify him as anyone whom he knew personally—an attitude which he had some trouble in explaining later, as we shall see. Nevertheless, the affair had advanced. Accidentally a real piece of evidence had been unearthed! Oates's reputation was made, and it was assumed at once that his tales were true. It was very long before the slight connection between the Coleman papers and the monstrous fabrication of Oates and Tonge was made clear.

The King had not remained in town to await the outcome of the Coleman affair. Instead, he went down to Newmarket on October 1st to see his horse Blue Cap run. For this he has been accused of "indecent levity." But surely he was better employed at Newmarket than in listening to the lies of Oates, as he rightly conceived them to be. It would have been well if many others as well had followed Charles's example and turned attention to something more innocent than a frenzied campaign of bigotry and hatred, in which, as L'Estrange says, "for fear of Popery they ran a-muck at Christianity itself."

L'Estrange does not exaggerate. The Plot seized upon the imagination of London, and, as Roger North remarks, "one might have denied Christ with less contest than the Plot." The life of every Roman Catholic was in danger. It was thought wise to send the Duchess of York, Coleman's employer, on a visit to her husband's daughter in Holland. The Duke's name itself was not spared, Oates's allegation as to what Father Fenwick had

said no doubt adding fuel to the flames always ready to break out against him.

Oates and Tonge were rapidly being elevated to the position of heroes of the mob. Burnet relates that, after the King had gone to Newmarket, a message came to him from Tonge that he desired to speak with him. " So I went to him to Whitehall, where both he and Oates were lodged under a guard. I found him so lifted up that he seemed to have lost the little sense he had. Oates came in ; and made me a compliment that I was one that was marked out to be killed. He had before said the same to Stillingfleet. But he made that honour which he did us too cheap when he said Tonge was to be served in the same manner because he had translated *The Jesuits' Morals* into English. He broke out into great fury against the Jesuits ; and said he would have their blood." When Burnet enquired of him what had induced him to join the Roman Catholics, Oates replied, laying his hands upon his breast, that God and His holy angels knew that he had never changed, but had gone over to them to betray them.

It is not surprising that Oates's past connection with the Roman Catholics, so intimate as he represented it to have been, puzzled some people, or that the claims which he made to have been so deep in the conspiracy against the King's life should have induced them to credit him with having actually lain under that guilt. Later on he was given to the bantering remark, " Set a rogue to catch a rogue," to excuse his self-asserted dealings with treason. His very value, he implied, came from his roguery.

As an example of the absurd stories which got about we may take a letter to Sir Francis Radcliffe from an unknown correspondent on October 9th. Oates, a Jesuit, it is related, meeting lately in Italy with the General of that Order, was set on by him to destroy the King and the Duke of Monmouth by gun, pistol, or poison. The King being lately at Windsor, Oates presented a gun or birding-piece against him from a dark window as he was passing by ; but by a miraculous providence the flint always flew out as he was about the doing of it. Then the King, on his return from Windsor to London, was taken with a great thirst and called hastily for wine, which, being presented to him in a

glass, looked somewhat troubled. His Majesty dipped a piece of bread into it and threw it to one of his dogs, which, having hastily eaten it, died presently thereof. " These are miraculous occurrences," exclaims the writer, who goes on to say that Oates confessed all in a letter to the Duke of York, who immediately went to the King with it; the fellow, it seems, being struck with amazement and horror of conscience.

## III

What might have happened to the tale of the Popish Plot, but for an incident which occurred on October 12th, fourteen days after the introduction to the King and Privy Council of its authors, it is of course impossible to conjecture. It is safe, however, to hazard that the sham Salamanca Doctor would scarcely have had, as L'Estrange calls it, " the good fortune to run away with the title of the Saviour of the Nation "—to the disgust of his colleague, the real Doctor of Oxford, who quarrelled with him about their claims to be the First Discoverer—had not Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey died. Godfrey's death came in the nick of time to prevent the waning of interest in the Plot; and that is a fact which must be fully taken into consideration in any theory about the death.

The Godfrey affair has been generally recognised as one of the most mysterious and baffling in the whole of English history. To it have been devoted one entire book, large sections of others, and numerous articles and pamphlets, without, however, it being possible to say that the mystery is any less profound than it was at the time of the occurrence. Indeed, there is actually more " mystery " about it nowadays than there was in 1678; for the great mass of people in England then accepted the view that the poor wretches who were denounced in December (and executed two months later) were the murderers.

Here the affair will only concern us as far as it is involved in the story of Titus Oates; but even thus it is necessary to go into a certain amount of detail.

Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey came of a respectable Kentish family, and both his father and his grandfather before him had been justices of the peace. The father, Thomas Godfrey, who represented first Winchelsea and then New Romney in Parliament, married twice and had no less than twenty children, Edmund being of the second family. Born at the end of 1621, the boy was sent for his education to Westminster and to Christ Church, Oxford. Thereafter he entered Gray's Inn, but, owing to defective hearing, decided not to continue his studies there. Moreover, his father was not in a position to do any more for him ; so before long he set up in business in London as a timber and coal merchant. His yard was in Hartshorn Lane, later Northumberland Street, Strand, and he resided in a house by it.

Godfrey became justice of the peace for Westminster, and, when the Plague year arrived, distinguished himself by his courage, not running away like so many, but attending to the duties of his post and doing all the good he could. His conscientiousness and charity not only made a great impression on his fellow-citizens, but were also rewarded by Charles II. with a knighthood and a suitably inscribed silver tankard.

When he was, with such unhappy consequences to himself, brought in contact with the intrigue of the Popish Plot, Godfrey had just returned from a holiday in France for the benefit of his health. Being a bachelor, he had to keep house for him in Hartshorn Lane a Mrs. Judith Pamphlin, who is described as " a tall, elderly person " ; and there was also with him a manservant, Henry Moor, whom he had promoted to be his clerk. Of relatives in London he had an old mother living in Hammersmith ; and two brothers, Michael and Benjamin, who lived in the City and traded with France. An intimate friend in his own neighbourhood, whom he called cousin, was Mary, wife of Captain Thomas Gibbons. All these people played some part in the story of the tragedy, or they would not have been mentioned here.

Roger North gives a personal description of Godfrey, which is of some interest. " His daily custom," he writes, " was to go about alone, creeping at all hours, in lanes and alleys, as his

fancy on occasions led him ; and, besides that, he was a man so remarkable in person and garb that, described at Wapping, he could not be mistaken at Westminster. He was black, hard-favoured, tall, stooping, wore a broad hat and sometimes a gold hatband, and went commonly wiping his mouth and looking on the ground."

Burnet says of Godfrey that he was a zealous Protestant and loved the Church of England, but had kind thoughts of the Nonconformists. Some considered him vain, and apt to take too much upon himself ; but Burnet does not agree with this view.

It is evident that Godfrey was a man widely known and respected in London. His friends were in all ranks of society and most of the religious sects. Dr. Lloyd, who preached the funeral sermon on him at his parish church, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, confirms what we have just heard from Burnet, speaking of his compassion to all manner of Dissenters, and amongst them a kindness for the persons of many Roman Catholics. One of these Romans was the Duchess of York's secretary. Coleman, though the son of an Anglican parson, was an early convert to Rome and was educated by the Jesuits, becoming a man of extreme views and a very ardent proselytiser. Indeed, to the moderate party among the English Roman Catholics he was a sore trial. His pale, ascetic face and hollow eyes marked him out as a fanatic, and his activities were unceasing. He obtained a post as secretary to the Duke of York, who was obliged to dismiss him on account of complaints made to the King. He took service with the Duchess, Marie Beatrice ; but after a time more complaints were made to Charles, this time by the Bishop of London. Coleman was again dismissed and went to France, only to reappear in a few weeks and take up his work once more.

Coleman's defenders allow his excess of zeal. L'Estrange, indeed, goes further and speaks of his " crime," but says that it " amounted to no more than an active intermeddling with State affairs without a commission," and that " he had a plot undoubtedly, upon the fingering of French money." There was somewhat more than this, as the Coleman letters show.

In any case, Coleman was a curious, and certainly a dangerous, friend for the kind-hearted Sir Edmund Godfrey.

Oates, we have seen, came to Godfrey with his first set of Forty-three Articles and swore to their truth, without leaving a copy, on September 6th ; while on the 28th he came again with the full Eighty-one Articles, swore to them, and this time left a copy. There is nothing in these two visits, or in the selection of so prominent a justice, to lead us to suppose that Oates intended more than to guard himself against a stifling of his Articles, or that he had any design against Godfrey. It is true that L'Estrange alleges it to have been " notoriously known " that Godfrey called Oates a rogue and a cheat from the very beginning ; and true that Oates, in exceedingly coarse language, used to assert that Godfrey was thrown into abject terror by the sight of the Articles and was " a cowardly rascal." There was, no doubt, an antipathy between the two, the natural antipathy between a good man and a ruffian.

Godfrey did not, after Oates's first visit, take any steps to communicate what he had heard to anyone else. No copy of the Articles had been deposited with him, he only knew that they contained charges of treason, and he had been informed that the King had a copy. There was, therefore, nothing for him to do. But, after the second visit to his office, the case was altered. He now had a copy of the whole set of Articles, from which he could see that very grave accusations were made against a large number of men, including some of high standing. There were at least insinuations against the Duke of York ; and as to his friend Coleman, in the Duke's household, he was accused of supplying the French Court with secret information from Whitehall and Westminster.

Apparently Godfrey sent a message to Coleman ; for the same day the two met in the house of Colonel George Welden, a man well known to them both, and were seen by him to be reading papers. That night Coleman disappeared, after having, as he thought, destroyed all documents in his possession that might incriminate him. He had left intact enough to bring him to the scaffold ; but, unaware of this, he surrendered himself on Monday,

September 30th. Next day, after his papers had been looked into, he was committed to Newgate.

In Williamson's notes on the examination of Tonge and Oates by the Privy Council on September 28th, there is a query, "Why not call to Sir E. Godfrey, what he did, etc.?" Now Oates alleged, at the trial of Green, Berry, and Hill for the magistrate's murder, that Godfrey had come to him, on the 30th (he thought), and had told him "what affronts he had received from some great persons for being so zealous in this business," while others threatened him for having been too remiss.

Naturally, we cannot attach any importance to Oates's allegation that Godfrey visited him[1]; but as to Godfrey having got into trouble in some way for his conduct with regard to Oates's depositions we have other evidence. Burnet asserts that he was "chid for presuming to meddle in so tender a matter," that he grew apprehensive, and that at a chance meeting in the street, after some discourse on the state of affairs, Godfrey told him he "believed he himself should be knocked on the head." Dr. Lloyd, in his funeral sermon, attributes almost exactly the same words to him. Another friend, Robinson, protonotary of the Court of Common Pleas, stated at the murder trial that on October 7th Godfrey said to him that he wished another had taken Oates's depositions, for he would have small thanks for his pains. The bottom of the matter had not yet been reached. "Upon my conscience," Godfrey added, "I believe I shall be the first martyr." "How so? Are you afraid?" enquired Robinson "No," was the reply, "I do not fear them if they come fairly, and I shall not part with my life tamely."

Yet another witness is Thomas Wynell, who related a conversation he had with Godfrey after the first arrests. The accused lords, said Godfrey, were innocent. Coleman would die, but not the lords. Oates was sworn and perjured. Wynell pressed him to be more explicit, but he was still vague. "You may live to see the end on't, but I shall not," he said. Finally he

[1] He also said, at the trial, that Godfrey called on him again, a week before he was missing, "in a great fright," and told him he went in fear of his life by the Popish party and had been dogged for several days. Further, he "came sometimes to me to give him some encouragement; and I did give him what encouragement I could, that he would suffer in a just cause, and the like."

admitted that he was master of a dangerous secret, which would be fatal to him. His security was Oates's deposition; Oates had first declared it to a public minister, and had secondly come to him by that minister's direction.

The minister referred to is obviously Danby. But it is not easy to make a coherent tale out of the various speeches attributed to Godfrey in this matter. Danby and the King (as Oates himself had told Godfrey) had known about the pretended Plot before he had, and therefore he could not justly be "chid" for observing secrecy concerning it. It was not for him to decide whether the Plot was to be made public. The dangerous secret of which he was master, the possession of which made him go in fear of his life, could not be his knowledge of the Plot. What was it then? An attempt has been made by one of the Plot's historians, Mr. Pollock, to show that it was Godfrey's knowledge that Oates was forsworn, because the Consult of April 24th was not held at the White Horse, as he alleged, but at St. James's Palace.

This is certainly an ingenious theory; but it cannot be extracted from Godfrey's own words, and it presumes that Coleman not only knew, but also told Godfrey of the place of the Consult. Even if Coleman had told Godfrey, the secret would only be fatal to the latter if the Jesuits were aware that he had been told and had resolved therefore to kill him. It is surely far more rational to suppose that the dangerous secret was Godfrey's consciousness that he had been in communication with Coleman about Oates's deposition, in which case he had certainly incurred the enmity of the inventors and promoters of the Plot-story. It is true that Godfrey's words, as reported by Wynell, do not give any indication of this. But was he likely to wish the secret guessed?

For some little time before his disappearance Godfrey was in a state of extreme sadness and abstraction. His friend, Mary Gibbons, afterwards deposed that he had come to her and said, "Oh, cozen, I do inherit my father's deep melancholy; I cannot get it off." And, again, "I am best left alone; I cannot get off this melancholy."

The allusion to his father Mrs. Gibbons explains by saying

that the father, though otherwise a very good man, had attempted several times to kill himself, and once in a fit of distraction had wounded three of his children with a cleaver. It is to be noted that Dr. Lloyd, in his funeral sermon, mentioned the report of " distraction " as a hereditary disease in Godfrey's family, which both his father and his grandfather had before him.

L'Estrange, in his desire to prove that Godfrey committed suicide, makes as much as possible of this inherited melancholia of his. There can be no doubt, however, that it was actually there. Some of his actions on the day before his disappearance, too, suggest that he was winding up his affairs before leaving the world—his destruction of a large number of papers, to which Mrs. Pamphlin testifies, and his settlement of some small debts.

On the morning of October 12th Godfrey seems to have received an early message from someone, and prepared to go out. His man Moor deposes to having been with him in the parlour at Hartshorn Lane and being asked by him to help him on with a new coat. Then Godfrey changed his mind, and said that an old one would serve that day well enough. As he went out through the gate of his yard, he stopped, turned to Moor, and looked seriously upon him, as if he would have spoken. But after a short while he went his way, without a word ; and Moor never saw him again alive. Various people afterwards bore witness to having seen him up to about one o'clock that day, in the Strand and in the neighbourhood of Paddington. There was even a story (but this is late and untrustworthy) of his being seen not far from Primrose Hill.

After this there was a silence. Godfrey's household had apparently expected him back to dinner. Also his friend Welden, who the night before had asked him to dine with him, did not know whether to expect him or not, as Godfrey had said that " he could not tell whether he should." The day passed without news. On Sunday morning Moor sent over to Hammersmith to enquire whether his master had spent the night at his mother's. This not being the case, Moor communicated with Godfrey's brothers, who came over to help him in a search for information.

Their efforts were unavailing for two days, and then, on October

15th, the Godfreys gave notice to the Lord Chancellor that their brother was missing. That afternoon the news was public property, to be followed by a great crop of rumours of all kinds, creditable or discreditable to Sir Edmund. But the favourite theory, in the state of general agitation over the "Popish Plot," was that he had been murdered by Papists for taking the depositions of Oates. L'Estrange in his *Brief History* tries to establish that this rumour was spread about town on the very day of Godfrey's disappearance. This contention, however, is not supported by the more trustworthy evidence on the affair.

So matters remained until Thursday, October 17th. On the morning of that day a very strange thing occurred. Mr. Angus, curate of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, went with another minister for an obviously very early dinner at a tavern in Ivy Lane, and then on to the bookshop of one Chiswell, in St. Paul's Churchyard. Here they were reading when, about one o'clock, a young man in a grey suit entered the shop and, though not known to him, clapped Angus on the back, "What news?" asked Angus. "Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey is found." "Where?" "In Leicester Fields, at the Dead Wall, with his own sword run through him."

The young man in the grey suit was never seen again. Angus hastened to tell the news to Burnet (who, however, in his account alters the locality of the find from Leicester Fields to near St. Pancras Church); and Burnet sent him on to the house of Dr. Lloyd, Godfrey's vicar. Lloyd had not yet dined, which proves that the day was young. He despatched a man to Godfrey's house to enquire whether anything had been heard there; but nothing was known.

This was a mysterious enough opening to the day. There was a further and greater marvel to follow. All the accounts cannot be made to harmonise. We will attempt here to construct a reasonable and intelligible narrative, using not only the evidence at the inquest on Godfrey, that before the House of Lords Committee, and the material collected by L'Estrange, but also the discoveries recently made by Mr. J. G. Muddiman[1]—the only

[1] "The Mystery of Sir E. B. Godfrey," in *The National Review*, September 1924.

new testimony of high importance that has been adduced about the Godfrey case for many years, including, as it does, the substance of the letter-books at Lambeth Palace of William Griffith, secretary to Henry Coventry, the Secretary of State, to whom it fell to enquire into the cause of Godfrey's death.

About three or four on the afternoon of October 17th two men, Brumwell and Walters, according to their own account (there was a third companion, whom they did not mention[1]), were crossing the fields near Primrose Hill, when they saw a cane and a pair of gloves lying on the ground near a ditch. They did not stop, but went on to the White House (on the site of the later Chalk Farm Tavern), where they spoke of what they had seen to the landlord, Rawson. He asked them to fetch the articles; but as it was raining they waited awhile. Rawson accompanied them when they went back to the spot, where they found again the cane and gloves, with a belt and scabbard. Then, as they were looking around, Rawson suddenly exclaimed, "Lord bless us! Here's a man murthered!" There was a body in the ditch.

They set off to the nearest constable, Mr. Brown, who, with some other men, followed them to the ditch. As he saw the body, Brown exclaimed, "I wish it be not Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey!" They raised it from the ditch, and carried it to the White House, where it was identified. News was sent to Godfrey's relatives and to Whitehall, with such speed that a coroner's jury was ready to sit at the White House the next morning. An inquest was held, and on the following day the verdict was returned that Godfrey had been strangled, feloniously, wilfully, and of malice aforethought, by persons unknown.

It is not proposed to go into the details of the inquest, but only to mention certain points in connection with the affair which seem beyond dispute. Obviously there had been no murder for the sake of common robbery. Besides the articles upon the bank by the ditch, Godfrey's money and rings were found on his person. Only his papers appeared to be missing—if he had been carrying papers.

The body, when discovered, had been head downward in the

[1] See p. 83.

ditch, with the feet resting on some brambles. Strangulation was fairly obvious, the neck being dislocated, while round it was the impression of a cloth or cord (an inch broad, says Burnet), with dark ridges in the flesh on either side. These marks were not caused by Godfrey's collar, and were not noticed until the collar was undone. There were many apparent bruises upon the breast and head. But the most remarkable fact was that Godfrey's own sword was run completely through his body, under the left breast, and protruding from the back. Another sword-wound had only reached as far as a rib. In spite of these wounds, the clothes were not blood-stained, not even the shirt. Nor had blood been found in the ditch.

A point that came out at the inquest was, as the coroner told Sir Joseph Williamson, and Williamson recorded in a note, Godfrey was found " extreme empty, therefore had not eaten in two days or more." So, too, in Lloyd's funeral sermon we hear of " his sunk belly, his empty stomach, his blanched tongue." The inference was that Godfrey had been kept a prisoner somewhere before he met with his death.

Other points which came out were that the soles of Godfrey's shoes were " extreme clean," as the coroner told Williamson, which argued that he had been carried to the spot where his body was found; that two fields off from the ditch was " the track of a coach to a corner of a field out of the Paddington way." the track going back the same way;[1] and that the coroner had himself been close to the spot on the Tuesday evening previous to the discovery, to dress a horse, had washed his hands in a pond, and had seen nothing. Later evidence, not forthcoming at the inquest, was to the effect that both on Tuesday and on Wednesday harriers had been out after hares over the field in which the ditch was, and again nothing was seen.

Sir Roger L'Estrange tried desperately hard, when he came to write of the Godfrey case in his *Brief History*, to prove that

[1] " The bars through the grounds to the place where they flung him were forced," and the tracks, 'twas first thought of a coach, but upon better examination found by Serjeant Ramsey to be only those of a cart, were fresh, though the owners of the ground and neighbours knew of none since haytime. And hay also was found scattered upon the grass, with which they had either fed the cart-horse or hid his body in carrying it thither."—W. Griffith's letter-book, quoted by Mr. Muddiman.

Godfrey had committed suicide by throwing himself on his sword. He went over the evidence, produced new depositions to support his view and to upset the medical testimony at the inquest, and, it cannot be denied, tampered with facts. His theory has been followed, in good faith, by some later writers down to modern times. But it is an unnecessary distortion. L'Estrange and his followers are actuated by a praiseworthy motive in attempting to clear the Romanists of a foul charge. It cannot be done by making Godfrey throw himself on his sword.

It is, indeed, possible to hold that Godfrey committed suicide on one supposition. That is that he hanged himself, and that the sword-wounds were inflicted by someone else to disguise the fact. There was sufficient motive for suicide. Godfrey was melancholic, with an unfortunate family record. He believed himself in danger of assassination. He might therefore have yielded to a sudden impulse and made away with himself. But, in that case, to whose interest was it to cause it to appear he had been murdered? To his brothers', it may be said, to prevent the suicide's property being forfeited to the Crown. But, as L'Estrange himself shows, Godfrey's brothers made an appeal to the Lord Chancellor to secure the estate in case he should be found to have killed himself—a very unwise step if they wished to conceal a suicide. Moreover, the difficulties are immense in assuming that Sir Edmund went away from his own house and hanged himself elsewhere, from which place his brothers, days later, were able to smuggle his body to Primrose Hill.

A curious fact in connection with the inquest is that the evidence was not taken of either Mrs. Pamphlin or Mrs. Gibbons. Mrs. Pamphlin's daughter, Elizabeth Curtis, "a poor woman," according to L'Estrange, "that now and then did chair-work for them," was called and gave very untrustworthy evidence. Henry Moor was called. Mrs. Pamphlin was not. Now, she told L'Estrange that she believed her master had committed suicide, but that Moor, as early as October 15th, had said to her, "We are afraid he is murthered."[1] Mrs. Gibbons's evidence, which must

[1] L'Estrange's theory is that Moor, in his search, had already that day discovered Godfrey's body and was helping the brothers in concealing the fact of suicide.

obviously be of some importance, was indeed taken *after* the inquest and verdict.

Later, when the House of Lords Committee was examining into the case, she sent in a paper and was called before the Committee, where she was very roughly handled by Lord Shaftesbury. " You damned woman," he cried, " what devilish paper have you given us in ? " He " called her Bitch, etc." and threatened that if she did not confess that Mr. Pepys and others had set her to write the paper she should be torn to pieces by the multitude. It is not surprising that she fell into fits and was scarce able to get home. Shaftesbury's way with a witness was not pleasant.

Mrs. Gibbons's offence seems to have been that she supported the suicide theory. She and her daughter both deposed, for L'Estrange, that they had heard Michael and Benjamin Godfrey exclaim, " We are ruined, what will become of us ? " Such a fear could only be prompted by the idea that Sir Edmund had killed himself.

Nevertheless, we have seen that the difficulties are very great in supposing suicide. If the case was not one of suicide, it was murder. Three men were executed for murder, who were obviously innocent. Three others were accused of it, and there are those to-day who believe them guilty. Before coming to these attempts to find the murderers, we must resume the story in its proper chronological order.

## IV

Immediately after the coroner's inquest the Government took vigorous steps to get hold of those guilty of the crime. On October 20th there was issued a proclamation of a reward of £500 for the discovery of the murderers, with a promise of pardon to anyone giving evidence leading to it. On the next day Parliament met, full of panic and of zeal against the Papists, and the Commons appointed a committee to enquire into the Plot and the murder. In face of the storm Charles could do nothing but

declare that he "left the matter to the Law." On the 22nd Oates appeared at the bar of the House and reiterated the charges made in his Articles, giving also the names of those, ninety-nine in all, whom he accused of having received appointments in the government which the Roman Catholics were planning to set up in England. The Commons swallowed the whole story greedily, and appointed a "committee of secrecy" to deal with the matter.

The effect upon Oates of his favourable reception was what might have been imagined. Burnet describes him, about the time of his first appearance at the bar of the Commons, as thinking he had the nation in his hands, and as swelled up to a high pitch of vanity and insolence. Elsewhere he speaks of the "insufferable insolence" with which Oates talked of all persons. Roger North adds his testimony, though not referring to any particular period in Oates's career. "His common conversation," he says, "was larded with lewd oaths, blasphemy, saucy, atheistical, and every way offensive discourse. . . . A strong gusto he had to anything anti-Christian and used to honour St. Athanasius with the title of *Creedmaking Rascal.*" We shall hear more, from William Smith later on, about Oates's language, and of the company which he kept.

This was the man who was "the Saviour of the Nation," dressed himself like a bishop, in all save the lawn sleeves, was lodged in Whitehall at the public expense, with a guard to protect his precious life, and could claim almost what money he liked, until in little over a year he was drawing a pension of £1,200 *per annum.*

The Lords lost no time in associating themselves with the Commons, by appointing a "committee of secrecy"; while both Houses presented an address to the King for "Recusants to retire ten miles from London." This came before the Privy Council on the 27th, receiving the answer that His Majesty had given the order as desired; and on the 30th the order was issued, allowing up to November 7th for compliance with it. Meanwhile, on the 28th, the Test Act passed through the House of Commons, though it was not till twenty-three days later that

the House of Lords passed it, with a provision exempting the Duke of York.

On November 1st, however, both Houses had united in a strong resolution concerning the Plot. On the same day, the public funeral of Sir Edmund Godfrey took place. The body had been brought to Town from the scene of the inquest and " laid in the street," says North, " exposed to the view of all comers." The funeral procession mustered at Bridewell and walked thence to St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, headed by no less than seventy-two of the clergy. At St. Martin's the vicar, Dr. Lloyd—" the most zealous man against Popery " Burnet had ever known—went into the pulpit, flanked by two other parsons, and delivered a sermon mingling praises of the dead with denunciations of the Papists, not omitting reference to the cruel treatment to which his friend must have been submitted before his death.

Naturally the agitation into which the easily excited London populace had been thrown by the revival of the tale of the Popish Plot was increased by this display ; nor did anyone who could make money by it fail to take advantage of the fact. Souvenirs, ballads, copies of sermons, had a great sale ; and the ghost of " Sir Edmundbury Godfrey "—as the name was popularly spelt —commenced to walk, not to be laid for many years.

Nevertheless, there was no clue to the identity of Godfrey's murderers ; only the persistent conviction in the popular mind, sedulously encouraged by their enemies, that the Roman Catholics were responsible. Even the progress of the Plot itself was held up for want of corroboration of Oates's stories against anyone except Coleman. Tonge, we have seen, claimed to be no more than the introducer of Oates. The Government's legal advisers —Wyndham, Atkins, and Bertie, Justices of the Common Pleas —were called in on October 18th to receive Oates's narrative and to advise the Privy Council whether one witness's evidence alone was sufficient to convict. They delivered their opinion next day, that while one witness, without further evidence, was not sufficient to convict any person for compassing the death of the King, " if one witness swear fully in the point with one or more other witnesses concurring in material circumstances to

the same fact, it is sufficient to indict or convict for such treason."

Obviously there was a great opportunity for someone who could come forward with a story sufficiently plausible, in the existing state of public opinion, to be accepted as corroborating Oates; and there was the £500 reward awaiting for him if he could point to Godfrey's murderers. The opportunity made the man; and William Bedloe appeared. It is true that the rascally Captain Charles Atkins was first in the field, before the end of October, with his denunciation of his namesake, Samuel Atkins, Pepys's clerk at the Admiralty; but that denunciation came to nothing, does not concern Oates, and need not detain us. We come to a far more important figure, one of those whose "crimes conspired to make them great," and a man whose story for a time is closely connected with Oates's.

At the beginning of November both Secretaries of State, Coventry and Williamson, received letters from a man named Bedloe, giving an account of "a horrid design" of the Papists, and asking that the Mayor of Bristol should be directed to send him to London to appear before the Privy Council. Coventry's and Williamson's answers, dated November 2nd and 5th respectively, are extant. Coventry says that he does not understand his correspondent's desire to come to London "clandestinely, and not to be seen by the people that sent you out of town"; but he encloses a letter to the Mayor, asking him to further Bedloe's speedy coming. Williamson tells him to repair to London in the privatest manner he may, and also asks the Mayor to help him.

William Bedloe seems to have come originally from Chepstow, where a mother and sister were still living. Sir John Reresby says he was a cobbler's son, "but had cheated a great many merchants abroad and gentlemen at home by personating my Lord Gerard and other men of quality and by divers other cheats." He had certainly been abroad, as he claimed; and possibly in the army of the Prince of Orange, after which he alleged that, "finding the religious houses kind," he was persuaded in 1674 to become a Roman Catholic. It was later still, we may suppose, that he was in the service of Lord Bellasyse.

What Bedloe omitted to reveal about his past life was that he had been in prison in both France and Spain. More lately he had been in Newgate, whence he had been but recently released when he wrote to the Secretaries of State. According to North, he was so well known in London that he could not venture on coming forward there, for which reason he asked to be arrested in Bristol. On his own confession later, he was "a great rogue" to his King and Country. He added, however, "If I had not been so, I could not have revealed what I have done"—which is on a par with Oates's favourite expression, "Set a rogue to catch a rogue."

Bedloe arrived in London, and on the evening of November 7th appeared before Charles and the Privy Council. He told of plots for landing men in South Wales and in Lincolnshire, involving Lord Powis, Lord Bellasyse, and many other Roman Catholics in England. He claimed to know this from having lived four years among the Jesuits, from whom he had all. Coming to Sir Edmund Godfrey, he produced a story of his murder in Somerset House, into which he had been trepanned by a pretence of a great discovery. The murderers were "Le Fere"; "Mr. Welsh"; the chapel-keeper in the Queen's Chapel; and "my Lord Bellasis' gentleman," who had actually strangled Sir Edmund. They had offered Bedloe 2,000 guineas to be in the affair, without telling him who it was that was to be murdered. "Le Fere" had told him all immediately after the murder. He had gone down to Bristol with the matter on his conscience. There he had sent for his mother, who charged him, upon her blessing, to discover whatever he knew. He would take his oath and the Sacrament of all this!

Examinations of the new King's evidence before both Houses of Paliament followed, and the story of the murder developed. Bedloe first told the Lords that the murderers were Charles Walsh and "Le Fere," Jesuits, and the two unnamed laymen, but now said that he had seen the body before it was carried out of Somerset House. Asked if he knew Titus Oates, he denied it. Further details came from a second appearance before the Lords, implicating two more laymen, Penthard (whom in a still later

version he converted into Father Pritchard, a Jesuit) and Atkins, *i.e.* Samuel Atkins; stating that he himself came to Somerset House too late for the murder, but received an account of it from the actors; and alleging that the corpse was afterwards laid at the high altar of the Queen's Chapel. Further, he now announced that he had several things to communicate relating to the Plot, and was "able to confirm several passages which Mr. Oates had discovered," but desired leave to give his testimony in writing.

The paths of the two King's evidences were beginning to converge! We have no indication, however, that they had yet met since the launching of the Popish Plot. To put them at their ease in testifying, warrants of general pardon for any offences up to November 1st were issued; to Oates on November 10th, to Bedloe on the 15th, the latter warrant being afterwards found ineffective.

One of the most serious points in Bedloe's pretended confession was that, by laying the scene of the murder in Somerset House, the Queen's own residence, and by implicating in the deed some of those resident there, he caused suspicion to rest upon Catherine herself of knowing something about it. She hastened to clear herself both by declaring her detestation of the murder and by allowing full access to Somerset House, including her private apartments. Her frank attitude disarmed suspicion. Her enemies, however, were not yet done with. As though he were determined not to be outdone by the new rival in the field, Oates came forward against her.

There was a difficulty in his way, that two months previously, when formulating the general body of his charges to the Privy Council, he had professed to have exhausted his list and to know no more than he had said against "any person of what quality whatsoever." But it needed more than such an obstacle to stop Titus Oates. Disregarding his previous declaration, he now brought forward a very serious accusation indeed. Mrs. Elliot, wife of one of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, came to the King and told him that Dr. Oates had something to swear against the Queen, if he would give way to it. Charles, who told Burnet that he was "willing to give Oates line enough," consented that he

should be heard. Accordingly Oates once more appeared before the King and Privy Council on November 25th, and declared that the Queen herself was implicated in a plot against the King's life. How Charles received the astounding statement in Council we should like to have heard.

This was, of course, a very different matter from the faint suggestion which might be derived from Bedloe's story, that the Queen knew something about Godfrey's murder. Once made, the new charge must be fully investigated. The Privy Council very naturally asked Oates how it was that he had not made it earlier, but had declared that he had "nothing more to say against any great persons." If he had said that, he replied, he must crave their lordships' pardon. By persons of quality he understood members of the House of Peers and the like. To a further question, as to whether he knew Bedloe, he answered that it was like that he had seen him, but he did not know him by that name. He may have met him under the name of Wilkins, in Spain.

Only a few days later the Bishop of Llandaff, conducting an examination down at Chepstow of Bedloe's mother and sister and of a friend of the family, elicited the fact that Bedloe had once boasted that he was familiarly acquainted with Mr. Oates in Spain, and that he and his brother James were to be witnesses for him when he came to England to discover the Plot. The mother could not remember whether William had met Oates in Spain or in Flanders.

Though such witnesses were no doubt likely to be confused, it certainly seems from their evidence that Oates and William Bedloe were previously acquainted. The probability is not lessened by the fact that Bedloe, challenged later with his denial to the House of Lords of knowledge of Oates, said he had known him only as Ambrose; and Ambrose or Ambrosius, as we have heard, was a name under which Oates had passed, at least in Flanders.[1]

From the Privy Council Oates's accusation against the Queen was referred to the House of Commons, at the bar of which, on November 28th, he once more took his stand and lied.

[1] In December 1681 William Frankland, a merchant, testified that Oates had a close acquaintance with both William Bedloe and his brother in Spain in 1678 (*Calendar of State Papers*, 1680-1, p. 602).

It was at this accusation of the Queen at the bar of the House of Commons that Oates burst forth, in that drawling voice which he affected, with the famous words, " Aye, Taitus Oates, accause Catherine, Queen of England, of haigh traison."[1]

Of Oates's manner of pronunciation Roger North gives another example. He was sitting in the gallery of the House of Commons at the enquiry held in 1689 as to the responsibility for the death of the Rye House plotters ; and near him sat Titus Oates. North's brother, Sir Dudley, was under examination as to his alleged share, and made an unexpected answer to some question put to him. " My neighbour," records Roger, " being, as I suppose, frustrated of his expectations, cried out ' Aw Laard, aw Laard, aw, aw ! ' and went his way." This drawl was, it seems, an imitation of the manner fashionable at Court, of which North furnishes a specimen, from the mouth of Lord Sunderland : " Whaat if His Maajesty taarn out faarty of us, may he not have faarty others to saarve him as well ? And whaat maaters who saarves His Maajesty, so long as His Maajesty is saarved ? "

Oates's charge amounted to this, that he had seen, in the previous May, a letter from Sir George Wakeman to Father Ashby, in which he said that the Queen had engaged him in the work of contriving the King's death ; and that he had been in an antechamber at Somerset House in July, when three or four Jesuit priests, for whom the Queen had sent, and on whom he was waiting, were received by Catherine in her own chamber and told by her that she would no longer endure the affronts which had been put upon her. He had later seen her himself and watched her give them £4,000 for the Society.

The Commons, ready to swallow any absurd tale which Oates might produce to them, demanded that Catherine and her household should be at once banished from Court ; but the Lords showed more sense and declined to associate themselves with the Commons. They heard the evidence both of Oates and of Bedloe, who had hastened to back up his colleague, and were much impressed by failure of either to explain how it was that

[1] The spelling is somewhat clumsy, from the point of view of phonetics ; but it is the traditional one.

he had not revealed the Queen's guilt before. We have heard Oates's excuse. Bedloe, still more lamely, pretended that he had forgotten the matter.

Charles seized the opportunity afforded by the Upper House's refusal to be stampeded into concurrence with the Lower, and ordered Oates to be put under arrest and his papers impounded. Unhappily the Commons, with the mass of public opinion behind them, would not abandon Oates and forced his speedy release. The Queen, however, was saved, for the present at least.

Against this failure Oates had a triumph to set. On November 27th Coleman was tried, convicted, and condemned to death; on December 3rd he was executed. Oates was the first and principal witness against him, repeating the charges which he had previously made, but adding much to show that he knew Coleman well, had carried letters for him, and had personally heard him express approval of the plot to kill the King, particularly at a meeting at Wild House, in Wild Street, Strand, a great Roman Catholic centre, after the Consult of April 24th.

It was in vain that the unhappy man protested that at his examination before the Privy Council Oates had told Charles he had never seen him before, whereas now "he is extremely well acquainted with me, and hath a world of intimacy." "My sight was bad by candle-light," explained Oates, "and candle-light alters the sight much. When I heard him speak I could have sworn it was he; but it was not then my business." Also, he continued, he was so weak after being up two nights taking prisoners that, upon his salvation, he could scarce stand upon his legs. Lastly, "Mr. Coleman had several periwigs, and a periwig doth disguise a man very much."

Bedloe followed Oates, claiming also to have met Coleman, and to have heard him in May 1677 say, respecting the great design, that "if it were necessary to destroy an hundred heretic kings he would do it."

When witnesses like Oates and Bedloe were allowed to bring forward such "evidence" (though it must be admitted that Lord Chief Justice Scroggs made some show of fairness in pressing Oates as to the discrepancy between his statements to the Council

SIR WILLIAM SCROGGS, L.C.J.

*From the painting by an unknown artist in the National Portrait Gallery*

[p. 72

and now), Coleman's chances were poor. It was his own letters, however, which condemned him. Sixteen of them were read in court. He was shown to have been, since 1673, in correspondence with leading Roman Catholics on the Continent, and notably with Père de la Chaise in Paris, concerting with them the best means of restoring the faith in Britain, securing the position of the Duke of York, etc. Coleman had preserved not only his correspondents' letters, but also drafts of his own, from which it could be seen that he had pressed for considerable sums of money to promote the ends which he had at heart. In particular, he had appealed to La Chaise for £20,000 for "a mighty work," "no less than the conversion of the Three Kingdoms, and by that, perhaps, the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy which has so long dominated over a great part of the northern world."

The three judges who had been called in by the Privy Council in October, to advise on the admissibility of Oates's unsupported testimony, had also advised that "to endeavour to extirpate the religion established in this country, and to introduce the Pope's authority by assistance of foreign powers, is high treason." According to this, Coleman was undoubtedly guilty of high treason. The subtler legal aspects of the case, whether, for instance, he could be held thereby to have compassed the King's death, need not detain us. Coleman had not done any of the things with which Oates charged him. But high treason was proved against him by the papers he had omitted to destroy, and it was in vain that he denied that he had meant harm. His conviction was inevitable, and to that extent he was not exactly a victim of Oates, whose infamous lies had merely aggravated, not made, the case against him.

Two days after Coleman's execution, which was carried out with the full barbarous formalities, five more potential victims were impeached by Parliament on the strength of Oates's accusation at the opening of the session. These were "the Five Popish Lords," Powis, Stafford, Bellasyse, Arundel, and Petre, who he had alleged were to be members of the proposed Roman Catholic Government of England. But their time was not yet. In the meantime, five other men—the Jesuit Fathers, Whitebread,

Fenwick, and Ireland, the Benedictine Pickering, and Grove, servant to Father Ireland—were brought up at the Old Bailey, where, on December 17th, the three last named out of the five were convicted of high treason. The case against Whitebread and Fenwick broke down because Bedloe had nothing to say about them from his personal " knowledge."

Oates's evidence, which came first, was an amplification of his previous statements. For instance, he had actually seen the resolve (that Pickering and Grove should kill the King) signed by the three separate parties into which the Consult at the White Horse had broken up on April 24th.

Fenwick desired to put in, against Oates's claim to have been in London on April 24th, " an authoritative writing from St. Omers, under seal from the College,[1] and certified by all in the College," to the effect that Oates was there from his entrance to his expulsion. Scroggs would not allow this. " It would not be evidence," he said. " I know not what you cannot get from St. Omers, or what you will not call authentic." " Does your lordship think there is no justice out of England ? " retorted Fenwick. The taunt did him no good. " You must be tried by the law of England," the Chief Justice maintained, " which sends no piece of fact out of the country to be tried."

This relieved Oates of the necessity, under which he found himself at later trials, of rebutting the evidence from St. Omer. Scroggs also protected him in other ways. When Ireland called him " a knight of the post " (very aptly, considering Oates's stories of himself as a letter-carrier), Scroggs rebuked him for abusing the King's evidence. Against the accused generally he was bitterly sarcastic. " Ask a Papist a question," he commented on one of their replies, " and you shall have a Jesuitical answer ! "

After William Bedloe had told his lies about his constant employment as an agent for the Jesuits, and his brother James, a minor scoundrel, had supported his statements about receiving

[1] Lord Castlemaine, in his *Compendium of the Late Trials*, calls this an official certificate from the municipal authorities of St. Omer, who said that enquiry had convinced them Oates had been at the College all the time between December 1677 and June 1678, and that the whole College, consisting of two hundred persons, had offered to take the same oath which " several of the best and ancientest scholars " had already taken.

money for his services, a letter was read which had been found among Father Harcourt's papers. This was from Father Edward Petre, and spoke of " the master consult of our congregation," to be held in London on April 24th. It contained the sentence, " Everyone is minded not to hasten to London long before the time appointed, nor to appear much about the town till the meeting be over, lest occasion should be given to suspect the design " —a natural enough warning in the circumstances, but one in which the word " design " was unfortunately liable to the sinister interpretation which the Crown wished to give it. The Lord Chief Justice permitted the letter to be used to fortify Oates's testimony that there was " a general plot," but not as evidence against any particular person, as the prosecution wanted to use it. Further, he now dismissed Whitebread and Fenwick from the case, though he directed that they should be retained in custody.

The defence put up by the other three prisoners was little more than a denial of the allegation against them and an attempt to impugn the veracity of Oates in particular. Ireland brought forward respectable witnesses to prove an *alibi* for him, not indeed in April, but in the following August, when Oates accused him of being present at another consult about the murder of the King. The Crown produced a witness to swear the contrary to Ireland's witnesses. The prisoners suffered terribly from their inability to get together the necessary testimony. They fought under a grossly unfair handicap, especially as the St. Omer certificate was ruled out.

The end came soon. Scroggs summed up dead against the accused, with violent abuse of their religion. The jury found them guilty, and they were sentenced to their dreadful fate by the Recorder, Sir George Jeffreys, who rivalled Scroggs in his abuse, with an assumption of moderation, however, before the actual sentence. The triumph of perjury only wanted the scaffold to complete it.

But, before that was to come, the Godfrey affair cropped up again, and for a time threw the interest in the rest of the Plot into the shade. Since a few days after Bedloe's first appearance

on the scene the pursuit of Godfrey's murderers had been held up by the fact that none of the men whom he accused could be found, except Samuel Atkins ; and Atkins had a good defence, an *alibi* on the supposed day of the murder. Suddenly events took a new turn, and a fresh scoundrel came forward, or rather was forced forward, to take his place beside Oates and Bedloe.

Miles Prance was an Irish Roman Catholic silversmith, who did some work occasionally for the Queen's Chapel and had hitherto lived a respectable life with his wife and family. One day, presumably October 1st or 2nd, he was in a coffee-house and incautiously gave his opinion about the Jesuits whom Oates had been rounding up, saying that they were honest men. At this some of the company threatened to denounce him to the Privy Council. In alarm he left his house for a couple of days and slept at a friend's.

Eleven weeks later a lodger of his, with whom he had quarrelled over rent, conceived the idea of involving him in the Godfrey affair, and informed the authorities that Prance had lain away from home about the time of Sir Edmund's disappearance—instead of, as really, ten days earlier. On December 21st Prance was arrested and brought at once to the House of Commons to be questioned by the committee which had the affair in hand. Now Bedloe was in the lobby of the House that day, and, seeing Prance standing there, exclaimed, " This is one of the rogues that I saw with a dark lantern about the body of Sir Edmund Godfrey ; but he was then in a periwig."

L'Estrange maintains that Bedloe had arranged this recognition-scene with the rascally Sir William Waller. It would certainly be easier to understand the incident if this could be proved. But there are difficulties in the way if we go further and imagine that Bedloe was in collusion with Prance as well; for in that case their tales of the murder ought to correspond, which they do not.

The silversmith was taken to Newgate and placed for two December nights in its worst dungeon, " the condemned hole." Lying here in irons, he broke down and decided to " confess." He only stipulated for a pardon. The House of Lords, which

now had the matter in hand, sent a deputation to interview him, and the result was that on December 23rd he was out of "the condemned hole," a self-accused accomplice in Godfrey's murder, but with a promise of pardon if he would tell all he knew.

Lloyd calls Prance "a white-livered man of no principle"; L'Estrange "a poor, sneaking off-and-on wretch that's scarce worthy to be named on the same day with the other two"—Oates and Bedloe. Whatever else he was, Prance was a liar of such astounding inconsistency that it is equally difficult to believe either his statements or his denials. But, as no one claims that his story of Godfrey's murder is true, we need not delay over his alternate confessions and recantations.

The gist of his account, as it ultimately shaped itself, was that Sir Edmund Godfrey was enticed into Somerset House by three men, a Father Gerald, Hill, servant to Dr. Gauden at Somerset House, and Green, cushion-man in the chapel there. The strangling was done by Green (who was really a feeble old man), while the other two and Berry, the gatekeeper, helped. Prance himself and an Irishman (afterwards stated to be a Father Kelly) were only involved as passive accomplices, but assisted in the removal of the body. From his acquaintance with Somerset House Prance was able to furnish abundance of local colour. For a motive to the crime, Godfrey "loved not the Queen or her servants"; and Lord Bellasyse engaged Gerald to have it committed.

Two points in connection with Prance's imprisonment, both in "the condemned hole" and in other cells in Newgate, remain obscure. Did he, as was commonly said, feign madness? And was he tortured, particularly after his first recantation? There was plenty of evidence that he had fits of raving, though the gaolkeeper's opinion was that they were pretended, and that he behaved better in irons than out of them. With regard to torture, the question does not rest upon the credibility of Mrs. Cellier,[1] who affirmed that Prance had been subjected to the rack, nor is it answered by the fact that, in September 1680, she was convicted of libel for her *Malice Defeated* and sentenced to the pillory. A significant note by Williamson at Prance's examination

[1] See p. 148.

before the Privy Council on December 30th, after his first recantation, informs us that the Lord Chancellor (Finch) and others suggested "to have him view the rack." It is, to say the least, not improbable that he did view it speedily; for, back at Newgate, he withdrew his recantation.

The year closed with the Godfrey case still unsettled, with two rival claims to a solution of the mystery, and with Prance, Green, Hill, Berry, and Atkins all in Newgate in connection with it. In Newgate also, awaiting a horrible death, were Ireland, Pickering, and Grove; Whitebread, Fenwick, and other Jesuits, who were still unconvicted; and many lesser folk, such as Medburne, the actor. Meanwhile, in his lodgings in Whitehall, Titus Oates, like a bloated spider, repaired the holes in his web, so that he might be able to catch other victims. Yet, in spite of his pension and his armed guard, he was not content. To the Council on December 31st, as Williamson notes, he "expressed a fear of being in Whitehall and as if he were in danger in it, and offered, if any of them would carry him with them to their houses, he would go with them." We do not hear of any invitation in response to this appeal.

Nevertheless, the new year soon brought triumphs for the Salamanca Doctor. On January 24th, the date of the dissolution of Parliament, Ireland and Grove went to the scaffold. Charles respited Pickering; but the new Parliament was less tractable and even more anti-Romanist than its predecessor, and voted an address praying for Pickering's execution. The King was forced to give way, and in May the Benedictine followed the Jesuit and his servant.

Before that, however, came the trial and conviction of Green, Hill, and Berry for the murder of Sir Edmund Godfrey. Prance had at last decided to play the part of King's evidence. Of those whom he had named as implicated in the crime the priests, Gerald and Kelly, could not be found. The other three were brought to the King's Bench on February 10th, and by the end of the day were found guilty, amid the cheers of those members of the public who were admitted to the court.

Oates was called as first witness for the Crown; but this was

not really his case, and his evidence was slight. " Mr. Attorney," said the Lord Chief Justice to Sir William Jones, Attorney-General, before Oates was put forward, " I suppose the case you make of it is this, that that [Godfrey's taking of the depositions and his opinion of them] might be one of the motives to do this act, because he was forward in the discovery of their plot." " It is so, my lord," replied Jones. Oates then testified to his two visits to Godfrey, and followed with the lies, which we have already heard,[1] about the magistrate's calls upon him for encouragement.

The rival testimonies of Prance and Bedloe formed the backbone of the Crown case. Prance retold his original tale, amplified in detail, of being enticed into the affair by Gerald and Kelly, of the strangling of Godfrey by Green, and of his finishing off by the others—Prance himself having played but a watching part. Bedloe told how " Le Fere," or " Le Faire " and other priests had endeavoured to procure him to kill Godfrey, and, failing to persuade him, had killed the magistrate themselves. They had informed him of the murder immediately after, and he had actually seen the body in Somerset House, and Prance in the room with it. These two stories the prosecution claimed to be perfectly compatible; and Scroggs instructed the jury that it was impossible for two men to agree in a tale, " with all circumstances," if they never conversed together, unless they were telling the truth! The jury willingly took their cue, and brought in a verdict of guilty against the three accused.

Green and Hill were hung, drawn, and quartered on February 21st. Berry, who, unlike them, was a Protestant, was given another week, probably in the hope that he would confess his guilt, and then suffered the same fate. All had maintained their absolute innocence of the crime; and no one now denies that they spoke the truth. Their martyrdom leaves unsolved the mystery of Godfrey's murder.

The theory has been put forward,[2] with great wealth of detail, that in the evidence of Bedloe and Prance combined (Oates being negligible in the matter) we have the real key to the mystery. Bedloe named the real criminals, Prance knew who they were,

[1] See p. 57 n.

[2] Mr. John Pollock, *The Popish Plot.*

but desired to shield them, especially as he was himself implicated. The reason why the Jesuits killed Godfrey was because Coleman had told him where the Consult of April 24th was held ; and this was Godfrey's " dangerous secret."

Therefore the actual murderers were, according to this theory, Le Fevre (Bedloe's " Le Fere "), confessor to the Queen ; Walsh, in Lord Bellasyse's household ; and Pritchard—all three Jesuits ; a servant of Bellasyse ; and Prance, who was the man Bedloe had erroneously described as " the chapel-keeper." They enticed Godfrey into Somerset House, strangled him there, and afterwards smuggled his body out, and deposited it near Primrose Hill, giving it the appearance of suicide with Godfrey's own sword. How Bedloe came to know anything about the crime was because he lodged with Le Fevre and Walsh near Wild House, was in daily contact with them, " wormed part of the secret out of his friends," and " obtained a general idea of the way in which the murder had been committed and of the persons concerned in it." Prance, on the other hand, was actually implicated, but " was one of the most astute and audacious of the Jesuit agents " and managed to throw the authorities off the scent by a tale which condemned three innocent men to death.

The theory is desperately ingenious. But it involves belief in a whole string of conjectures, for not one of which can we find any valid evidence, while some are plainly incredible. We are asked to imagine that Coleman, knowing the secret about the Consult of April 24th, was foolish enough to confide it to Godfrey ; that he then went back and informed the Jesuits that he had done so ; that the Jesuits thereupon decided to murder a man who was well known to be friendly to Roman Catholics ; that they succeeded in doing so (this was after Oates's Jesuit-drives, be it remembered), and in the Queen's residence of Somerset House, of all places, and conveyed the body unseen to Primrose Hill ; that Bedloe found his fellow-lodgers so abnormally indiscreet as to blab to him what they had done ; and, finally, that Prance was an astute Jesuit agent. This is a chain every link in which is weak. It will not bear a test.

If, then, it is not rational to connect Le Fevre, Walsh, and

Pritchard with Godfrey's murder, nor, in fact, any Roman Catholic rather than anyone else, it still remains to discover a possible murderer. There is a strong motive for someone of the opposite party, *i.e.* of the patrons and adherents of Oates and Tonge, to wish Godfrey out of the path. Godfrey had given them away to Coleman, and, but for the accident of Coleman having failed to destroy all his papers, would have left them without a scrap of real evidence on which to support their charges. There is the motive of revenge on the friend of the Roman Catholics. And, at the same time, what could be more fortunate for the success of the "Plot" than the striking down of a Protestant justice of the peace, and the attribution of it to the Roman Catholics? We have seen that the murder actually made the Plot. It does not seem too much to attribute to someone of the Plot-mongers sufficient cunning to foresee that this would be so.[1]

It is a different matter, however, to point to any person or persons as the actual killer of Godfrey. A view held by a few is that Oates perpetrated it himself. He certainly hated the man and indecently rejoiced over his removal. Godfrey to him was "a cowardly rascal." William Smith, to whom he made the remark, alleges that Oates also said, with regard to the accepted story of the murder: "I believe not a word on't; but my plot had come to nothing without it. It made well for me! I believe the Council would never have taken further notice of me else, if he had not been found."

Oates and Bedloe always made a joke of the Godfrey affair, according to Smith. On one occasion he found them sitting with Prance, talking it over. Oates, with a laugh, cried to Smith: "Here is Bedloe, that knew no more of the matter of the murder than you or I did. But he got the £500, and that did his work, and gave this blockhead"—indicating Prance—"but £30 of it.[2] He picked him up in the lobby of the House of Lords and took him for a loggerhead fit for the purpose!" At which Bedloe laughed heartily, and Prance looked displeased.

[1] It has been pointed out by various writers what a suspicious similarity there is between the stories of the Godfrey case and of the alleged attack upon Arnold, another J.P., by Giles, in April 1680.

[2] Prance himself afterwards told L'Estrange that he got £30 by His Majesty's orders, and only £5 from Bedloe.

Nevertheless, brutal as was Oates's attitude over Godfrey's death, we must not therefore conclude that he perpetrated it himself. He always showed himself too great a poltroon for us to imagine that he did it with his own hands. Nor can we find anything to indicate that he was privy to arranging the crime, at the date of which it must be remembered that he was lodged with Tonge under guard at Whitehall.

If we cannot believe that Oates, and still less Tonge, were concerned in the murder which served their ends so well, the same objections do not exist with respect to their patrons, the Earl of Shaftesbury and his cabal. Charles II., we have seen, believed that Shaftesbury was behind the Plot at the start. He may have been mistaken in this; but there is no doubt that Shaftesbury soon took charge and guided the agitation against the King's Ministers, the Duke of York, and the normal succession to the throne. In Parliament and out, he, "the master of the blood-hounds," in L'Estrange's phrase, "governed the chase," inflaming public opinion, browbeating and cursing witnesses who had the misfortune to come before him, offering bribes for false evidence, and protecting the liars who played his game. He was wicked enough not to stick at murder, as his record shows. He was powerful enough, even in opposition, to have his behests carried out. He could pay for a crime, its commission and concealment. Godfrey's action in warning Coleman was against his interests, and for him Godfrey was a man best put away.

There is, it may be admitted, no *evidence* for Shaftesbury's implication in the murder. The article, however, above mentioned, by Mr. J. G. Muddiman, very ingeniously suggests the guilt of one of Shaftesbury's supporters, Philip Herbert, seventh Earl of Pembroke, the man that "drank himself into insanity," but not before he had personally committed at least one brutal murder and had attempted several others, not to mention violent assaults. Now after the killing of Nathaniel Cony in a London tavern one night, when Pembroke knocked down and kicked his victim—apparently as drunk as himself—so severely that, a few days after, he died, Sir Edmund Godfrey was the foreman of the jury that brought in a verdict of wilful

murder, leading to Pembroke's conviction for manslaughter before the House of Lords.

Mr. Muddiman points out that Godfrey's absence in France seems to coincide in date with Pembroke's trial by his peers—it was on April 4th, 1678—and his release as a first offender, and infers that "he thought it best to be out of the way when Pembroke was liberated." Here, as he says, we have a potential murderer and a motive. Then Pembroke lived in Leicester Fields, where Godfrey's body was first reported found. Had it been intended to leave the body there? Hard by was St. Giles's, where lived one Edward Linnet, a butcher—the man who did not give evidence with Brumwell and Walters of the discovery of the body near Primrose Hill, although he was with them, and his dog first found it. Coupling all this with the receipt of a letter by Godfrey before he went out on the morning of October 12th and with the story of Godfrey being followed and "housed in St. Giles's," Mr. Muddiman constructs the theory that Godfrey was lured to Linnet's house and murdered at or near it, the violent nature of the death, the broken neck, the bruises on the breast and body, fitting in with the idea of a murder by the madman Pembroke. The corpse may then have been removed in Linnet's cart to Primrose Hill on October 17th and found there, by no accident, the same day.

It is a fascinating theory, and, unless the evidence on which it is based can be upset, seems to explain the great "mystery of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey" better than any other theory advanced since 1678.

Before leaving the subject, however, we may note that it is a little surprising that, as far as we know, no one has ever tried to identify Godfrey's murderer with William Bedloe, acting as an agent for someone else. He was smuggled out of London some time after the murder, with the help of other people, as he wrote to Sir Henry Coventry. These people he did not wish to know that he was returning. They might, therefore, be people who had employed his services for the commission of some crime and had reason to fear that he would turn informer. But when he came forward with his "discovery" they would have no reason to

fear more, for those whom he implicated were all Papists except Samuel Atkins. Therefore they could applaud an "honest" man without reserve.

If Bedloe was the actual murderer, we should have to assume that his employers were powerful enough to cover their traces and to prevent the discovery of the body until they wanted it discovered. That always remains the difficulty, to say where the body can have lain between the date of the murder and October 17th.

We must admit that there is nothing actually to show Bedloe as the assassin. But, anyhow, as the fruits of his baseness he got great sums of money, beginning with the £500 reward in connection with the Godfrey case. He lived a life of scandalous libertinage, L'Estrange says. He carried on his evil work as King's evidence not only in England, but in Ireland also, and was in part responsible for the death of innocent victims there. Yet on his death-bed, in October 1680, he swore before Sir Francis North to the truth of all the evidence he had given, and declared his conscience clear.

We can now at last leave the Godfrey case, of which L'Estrange rightly observes that it "was not so much Oates's Plot as a superstructure raised upon it." He adds: "Though the story of Godfrey does not affect Oates (to borrow his own words), yet Bedloe and Prance do mightily affect him, in lending him an affidavit or two toward the crutching up of an impotent plot that by this time was lame of all four."

In the spring of 1679 Oates published his Articles under the title of *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy*, with, at the end, "a list of such Noblemen and Gentry as are in this Conspiracy, whose names occur at present"—a significant qualification! To this pamphlet he prefixed a remarkable address to the King, whom he reminded that his two grandfathers, James I. and Henri IV., one by poison, one by stabbing, met their deaths at the hands of the Roman Catholics, who had also contrived "the late unnatural war" which had brought his father to his end; and another, shorter address to "Courteous Reader," dated April 15th.

## V

After the advertisement which was secured to his Plot by the supposed bringing to justice of Godfrey's murderers, Oates was able to proceed better with his campaign against the Jesuits. Whitebread and Fenwick had escaped him at the first attempt, owing to Bedloe's failure to swear hard enough against them. In June 1679 they were brought up for trial again, together with Fathers Harcourt, Gavan, and Turner—whence the name, "the Trial of the Five Jesuits." Here Oates must have known in advance that there was to be a vigorous attempt by the accused to contest his evidence with regard to the Consult of April 24th, against which the production of a deposition from St. Omer had not been allowed when Ireland, Pickering, and Grove were convicted. Oates bethought himself of making use of his old schoolmaster to support him.

He had, indeed, thought of using Smith as a tool before this. The manner in which he tried to secure him is very curious. Some time in September 1678, while Oates was still pretending to be a Roman Catholic, he came to Smith and desired him to write some Latin verses upon the Saviour and the Virgin Mary, which he might take to the Jesuits as his own. Smith wrote some verses, but refused, he says, to insert "a long harangue in the praise of the Virgin" for which Oates asked. Oates took the verses, and in return presented Smith with a pair of tweezers, which he had brought from Flanders!

A few days later, on the Saturday "before the great noise of the Popish Plot broke out," Oates came again to Smith, who invited him to accompany him to the Catherine Wheel, in the Strand. While they were there, Oates pulled out a handful of money, thirty to forty shillings, and offered it to Smith, in return for the many reckonings he had paid for him. Smith refusing the money, Oates asked him whether he had heard anything of a Jesuit plot against the King. Smith presumably said no, and they parted. Nothing further occurred between them until the end of October, when Oates, at the bar of the House of Lords, made false accusations against Smith; just

enough to get him into prison, not to hang him, North remarks.

Later, when the two men were friends again ("after I was got into his favour," says Smith), Oates confessed that the object of his two visits in September had been to "trapan" him, to get him at his mercy, so that he should be prepared to swear what he was asked. On November 1st Smith was arrested and brought before the Lords. Oates charged him with having made ridiculous and obscene remarks about the King—at which Charles, who was present, only laughed. Smith claims that, when he challenged Oates to say whether he, Smith, was in the Plot or a Papist, Oates said no. However, Black Rod took him in custody, and he was next examined by Lord Shaftesbury.

It appeared that Dr. Tonge and the villainous Robert Ferguson, Shaftesbury's *protégé*, had accused him of habitually defending the Church of Rome. Smith denied this. Then, asked Shaftesbury, "if thy friends can get thee out of these briars, wilt thou be an honest man?" Yes, Smith replied, he would to his power. (He knew what being an honest man meant.) On Shaftesbury's advice, he petitioned the Lords for his discharge, which he obtained; but his license for teaching was taken away from him. On his return to Islington he found that his enemies, including a vicar of the neighbourhood, whom he charges with having persuaded Oates to attack him, had got another master put into his school. There was no redress, and he was ruined.

Shortly before Christmas, 1678, Oates sent a message to Smith to call on him at Whitehall. He wanted him to make accusations of treason against the unhappy Medburne in Newgate. Smith claims to have resisted very flattering offers. Anyhow, he would not swear against Medburne; but he parted on friendly terms with Oates.

Next May Smith was again sent for. He was now in extreme need, not allowed to get work as a teacher, and only able to pay 13*d.* a week for his lodgings! He was threatened with Newgate if he did not swear as he was bid—not about Medburne, for that poor wretch had already died in prison, one of the minor victims of the Popish Plot, but in connection with the trial of

the Five Jesuits. He could hold out no longer. He became "an honest man," and forswore himself. At the beginning of the previous May, he declared in court, Oates had dined with him at his house in Islington. It was the first Monday in May, he recollected; and Oates was in "a summer suit, and a coloured ribbon, a green knot upon his shoulder."

Next day, at the trial of Langhorn, he gave similar evidence, but added that his wife was present at the dinner to which he had entertained Oates. Why had he not brought his wife to testify? asked Lord Chief Justice Scroggs. "He cannot find his wife," interrupted Oates on his behalf; and no more was said.

This story of the procuring of William Smith to perjure himself is rather long, but it is an interesting example of Oates's methods. The part of it which is told by Smith himself seems worthy of credit, in spite of the fact that in 1684 Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys considered it "very nauseous and fulsome" to have a confessedly forsworn witness, and would not admit the evidence of Smith, now ready to admit his previous perjury. The man's account of how he fell, however, is convincingly sincere.

On June 13th the trial opened, again at the Old Bailey, and again before Scroggs, assisted by North and Atkins. The early proceedings were much the same as on December 17th, Oates being the first witness for the Crown. Whitebread, Fenwick, and Gavan questioned him severely as to his statement; but Scroggs and his fellow-judges gave him their protection, and he lied on. Turner challenged him to say whether he had ever seen him before a certain date. "You were then in a disguised habit and a nasty periwig," replied Oates, "and I did not know you so well." This periwig excuse was a ready weapon in the hands of Oates!

A new blackguard was introduced by the Crown in this case, whose evidence followed Oates's. This was Stephen Dugdale, a man who, according to Burnet, appeared a more reputable witness than Oates or Bedloe. It was only a matter of appearance. Dugdale was no less infamous a liar than the others. Perhaps it may be considered to his credit that he died of *delirium tremens*

(in March 1683), after "seeing spectres," which *may* have been the product of remorse.

Dugdale had been found the previous December. A convert to Roman Catholicism, and made by Lord Aston steward on his Staffordshire estate, he had been dismissed in September 1678 for embezzlement and other misdeeds. Partly in revenge, he went and made a "discovery," which resulted in his arrest and his speedy accession to the ranks of the King's evidences. Now he was ready to testify to meetings between the accused Jesuits and others, with intent to have the King killed and the crime imputed to the Protestants, of whom there was afterwards to be a massacre. He further alleged that Harcourt had sent a letter announcing that Godfrey had been "dispatched," which Ewers, or Evers, a Jesuit in Staffordshire, had received as early as the Monday following Godfrey's disappearance.

Prance was the third witness, with a charge that Harcourt had personally told him of a design to kill the King.

Next came Bedloe, prepared, as he was not before, to speak from first-hand knowledge against Whitebread and Fenwick. He excused himself for his previous omission to do so by saying that it had not been convenient and would have stopped a design he was then upon.[1] The bulk of his evidence, however, was against Harcourt, to whom he pretended to have brought "packets and portmanteaus" from beyond the seas, all containing letters about the Plot. He had to admit, on examination by Harcourt, that when they met, about four years ago, he had borrowed £10 from the Jesuit on the plea of having lost his friends through becoming a Roman Catholic, and that he had never paid him back.

Petre's letter about the Consult was then read. Harcourt and Gavan explained it naturally enough; but Scroggs would not have their explanation. To him the letter "monstrously confirmed Mr. Oates's testimony to be undeniable." Another letter was produced, also from Harcourt's papers, in which a certain Christopher Anderton, writing from "Hilton" (Rome) in

[1] He referred to his alleged subornation by Nathaniel Reading, the attorney, to say nothing against Whitebread and Fenwick, for which, in the previous April, Reading had been tried and sentenced to a fine of £1,000, the pillory, and a year's prison.

February 1678, spoke of the promotion of "Mr. Thomas Harcourt" (Whitebread) and of "the patents" having been sent. These patents, William Harcourt said, were the *literæ patentes* for Whitebread's appointment as Provincial, as of course they were. But Oates maintained that they were the patents for the Roman Catholic Government that was to be set up; and Scroggs told Harcourt, "Methinks he interprets them plainer than you do."

The accused opened their defence with sixteen witnesses brought over from St. Omer, to supply the place of the previously rejected certificate, and to prove that Oates was never absent from the College as he pretended. As was to be expected, there was a certain amount of inconsistency and error in their evidence, in face of a hostile court, presided over by Scroggs, and in face, too, of a hostile public outside, of whom we shall hear more. But it is impossible to doubt that these witnesses, novices and servants from St. Omer, spoke the truth to the best of their ability. To disbelieve that involves a belief in "Trusty Titus"—one of L'Estrange's nicknames for him—and his tale of the Consult. Is there anyone to-day who will confess to that?

After Gavan and Ireland had called witnesses to prove *alibis* on certain dates, Fenwick attacked Bedloe, whom he showed to have been in the Marshalsea—"and lived a poor mean life and all the time fed upon the basket." "No doubt," interposed Scroggs, "he was a naughty man; he was with you in this plot!"

Sir Creswell Levinz, K.C., pointing out that the greatest part of the prisoners' defence was intended to invalidate Oates's testimony, called seven witnesses as to the truth of his claim to have been in London on April 24th. These included William Walker, a minister; a woman who kept a shop; three servants of Sir Richard Barker; William Smith; and Clay, an old Roman Catholic, by some said to be a priest. They professed to have seen Oates in London at dates varying between the latter end of March and early May. In addition, Sir Richard Barker, who had been away from home on one occasion and ill on another when Oates was alleged to have called, testified to what his servants had told him.

Whitebread drew attention to the discrepancies in these witnesses' evidence, whereon Scroggs and Chief Justice North responded with a *tu quoque* about the St. Omer witnesses. Scroggs, summing up, maintained the credit of Oates's witnesses. As to Oates himself, " They fall foul upon Mr. Oates," said Scroggs. " He appears to have been their agent, and whilst so bad enough ; but if he had not had a mind to have become a good man he would not likely have done us that good that he has done in discovering the design."

Scroggs was " glad indeed to see a gentleman here whose face we never saw before." This was Stephen Dugdale, whose face was destined to become less welcome to the Bench until he was paid to change it.

The jury having duly found the verdict they were expected to find, sentence was postponed until the next day, when the trial of Richard Langhorn took place. Langhorn, though a Roman Catholic, was not in orders like the others, but a lawyer. Against him Oates alleged that he was to be Attorney-General when the Plot should establish the Papists in control. But first Dugdale and Prance were put forward by the Crown to prove the general design, claiming no particular knowledge of the accused. Their evidence was the same as on the previous day.

Oates, as third witness, indulged in a long rigmarole, also much the same as before, but designed to implicate Langhorn in the regicide scheme. He swore that, when he informed him of the plot of Pickering and Grove, Langhorn " lift [*sic*] up his hands and eyes and prayed God that it might have good success." With regard to the appointments under a Popish government, he swore to having seen in Langhorn's chambers in the Temple the actual " commissions " for Powis, Arundel, Stafford, Langhorn himself, and others, all signed by Johannes Paulus de Oliva, General of the Society of Jesus.

Langhorn cross-examined Oates closely as to his connection with the Church of England and his conversion to the Jesuits ; but the judges refused to force Oates to answer more than he desired.

Bedloe followed with an impossible tale, which, however, was

accepted without hesitation, of having been in Langhorn's outer chamber and seen him in his study copying letters in connection with "the design." It was afterwards proved to Scroggs's satisfaction that it was a physical impossibility so to see from one room into the other; but this did not come out at the trial. Here Scroggs showed no sympathy with Langhorn's strenuous endeavours to demonstrate that Oates and Bedloe were not good witnesses. When he alluded to the rewards they got as King's evidences, Scroggs pulled him up. "Do you think, Mr. Langhorn," he demanded, "that the King will *bribe* his witnesses?"

Langhorn called in his defence the same people as had appeared for the Five Jesuits on the previous day, including those from St. Omer, sixteen in number.

It is amusing to read in *State Trials* that when they entered the Old Bailey Oates cried to the Lord Chief Justice, "My lord, here are Papists come into the court with their swords on!" "They will not draw them here," Scroggs reassured him; and the Lord Mayor added, "Dr. Oates, you are safe enough here."

What was really going on was shown when, after the foregoing day's evidence had been repeated, Lord Castlemaine entered the court. Castlemaine, if he did not know how to treat a sinning wife, was at least a brave man. He had come, unsolicited by Langhorn, to complain that intending witnesses for the defence were being "so beaten and abused without that they dare not come to give their evidence." The judges promised punishment of any of the guilty parties if he would furnish their names; which probably Castlemaine could not do, as we hear no more of the matter.

Langhorn now put in a fresh witness, the woman who had kept the White Horse at the time when Oates alleged that the Consult had been held there. She swore that no room there would hold above a dozen persons. Another witness, described simply as "a stranger," said twenty. Against this a witness for the prosecution said from twenty-five to thirty, which still fell far short of Oates's figure, fifty.

The last witnesses heard were the six who professed to have

seen Oates in London in the spring of 1678, together with Sir Richard Barker, who again repeated what his servants had told him. Scroggs's summing-up followed, giving the prisoner no hope. "I must tell you," he said to the jury, "the Plot is proved as plain as the day, and that by Oates; and farther, Oates's testimony is confirmed by that which never can be answered." This was Petre's letter of summons to the Consult,[1] interpreted as according to Oates.

The jury found Langhorn guilty; and then, the Five Jesuits having been brought in, the Recorder sentenced all six prisoners, with the usual tirade against Roman Catholicism. With regard to Langhorn he expressed his sorrow at the presence before him of "a man who hath understanding in the Law and hath arrived to so great an eminency in the profession." The dreadful sentence was received in court with "a very great acclamation." Six days later it was carried out in the case of the Jesuits; and on July 14th Langhorn was executed also. That all died maintaining their innocence only aggravated the public feeling against them, and the "last words" of the priests provoked bitter criticisms which they were happily beyond hearing. The indecency of religious hatred was seldom more deplorably exhibited.

Oates was triumphant, and no doubt the paying off of his score against Whitebread afforded him peculiar satisfaction. Soon, however, indeed only four days after Langhorn's death, he received a violent check. On July 18th four more accused persons were brought up at the Old Bailey, Sir George Wakeman, the Queen's physician, and three Benedictines, Corker, Marshal, and Rumley. Immense importance attached to this trial, for once again the Queen's name was introduced into the story of the Plot. Charles had been able to rescue his wife the previous November. But the ball set rolling by Oates and Bedloe was not allowed to come to rest. The charge against Wakeman had originally amounted to no more than that letters from the London Jesuits to St. Omer had alleged that he had consented to try to poison the King. It had developed into a specific accusation that Wakeman could be proved to have agreed and

[1] See p. 75.

Catherine to have abetted. Thus, as Burnet says, it was "looked on as the Queen's trial as well as Wakeman's." The effect was to produce a new grouping of the three parties, the accusers, the accused, and the Crown, in which the Crown, though the prosecutors, had no interest in securing a conviction.

Corker, Marshal, and Rumley were brought into the case because the Benedictine Order were charged with having contributed £6,000 towards the expenses of the poison-plot, and the three with having been agents of the Order.

Dugdale was called first, to give a general account of the plot. He showed his usual assurance, and, when Justice Atkins asked him what had induced the Roman Catholics to put so much confidence in him, replied that he had bestowed on them £400, and that the late Father Gavan had in return promised him he should be "canonized for a saint." The accused men questioned him very spiritedly; but there was nothing yet to indicate that the King's evidence would not prosper as before.

Prance, another general witness, was followed by a new informer, Jennison, younger brother of a Jesuit priest in Newgate, whose evidence was mainly about the late Father Ireland. "Dead men tell no tales."

It was not until Oates was called that the excitement began. He claimed to have actually seen a letter to the old and infirm Jesuit Ashby, when going to Bath to take a course of the waters. The writer was Wakeman, who not only advised Ashby as to his treatment at Bath, but also let him know that the Queen was ready to assist him (Wakeman) to poison the King.

Then, coming to the Queen herself, Oates related that in July 1678 a command had been sent by her for "the Fathers" to wait on her at Somerset House. "And, may it please your lordship, we did attend at Somerset House, and the Fathers went in to the Queen, into a chamber where she was, and I waited in an antechamber, and I did hear a woman's voice, which did say that she would assist them in the propagation of the Catholic religion with her estate, and that she would not endure these violations of her bed any longer, and that she would assist Sir George Wakeman in the poisoning of the King." Then, he went

on, he was brought in to see the Queen, who gave him a gracious smile; and, when she spoke, he recognised the same voice he had overheard in the antechamber.

An elaboration followed of Oates's earlier story of the negotiations with Wakeman in August, Oates claiming to have seen a receipt from Wakeman for £5,000 in Langhorn's ledger. He had also twice seen Wakeman's commission to be Physician-General of the Army when the Popish rule should be established. The second occasion on which he saw it was in Ashby's room, where Wakeman was writing one day, presumably, the prescription to be sent for Ashby in Bath.

Wakeman cross-examined Oates, asking why, when he first mentioned his name to the King and Privy Council, he had declared that he had never seen him in all his life, and did not know him. Oates made the same excuses as at Coleman's trial, that he had been up two nights and that the light was bad in the Council Chamber. He insisted that he had actually seen Wakeman twice before the meeting at the Council, and for the present was allowed to evade Wakeman's questionings as to his omission to say so earlier, proceeding to his charges against the three Benedictines, who also closely cross-examined him.

Bedloe, the next witness, deposed to having been in Father Harcourt's room when Wakeman received a bill for £2,000, sent by the Queen, and to hearing a conversation about the King's murder. So circumstantial was his evidence, in spite of manifest inconsistencies as to the extent of his acquaintance with Wakeman, that the physician, according to the record in *State Trials*, said privately to the other prisoners, "There is my business done!"

As a matter of fact, the turning-point in the trial was just in sight. Wakeman first called a good witness in Chapman, Mayor of Bath, and by trade an apothecary, who upset Oates's story about Wakeman's letter to Ashby prescribing a course of treatment. The torn half of this letter was produced in court, containing the prescription. Chapman had seen this letter before, when Ashby came to Bath. It was not in Wakeman's own handwriting, but his servant's; it was addressed to Chapman himself, who had preserved the prescription only; the prescription

had nothing in it about drinking milk, as Oates alleged, which would not at all agree with the Bath waters ; and the part of the letter he had destroyed, Chapman swore, had had nothing to do with a plot against the King. Oates could only reply that this was not the letter he meant ; there must have been two.

The appearance of Sir Philip Lloyd, Clerk to the Council, however, was the real sensation. He had been present at the meeting of Wakeman and Oates before the Council on the last day of September 1678, and told how, when Oates spoke of a letter from London to St. Omer about Wakeman having accepted £15,000 to poison the King, the Council called in Sir George, who denied it, and indeed carried himself as if not at all concerned at the accusation, and demanded satisfaction for the injury done to his honour. His carriage was not well liked by the King and Council, who called Oates in again. Did he know nothing personally of Wakeman, asked the Lord Chancellor, because they desired sufficient proof on which to ground a commitment? Oates lifted his hands—his favourite gesture—and said, " No, God forbid that I should say anything against Sir George Wakeman, for I know nothing more against him ! "

Such was Lloyd's evidence. " I remember not a word of all this," cried Oates. " My lord," said Wakeman, " this is a Protestant witness, too ! " Oates broke out into a long explanation, finishing up with the plea that " by reason of being hurried up and down, and sitting up, he was not *compos mentis* at the time." " What," the Lord Chief Justice exclaimed, " must we be amused with I-know-not-what for being up but two nights? . . . What, was Mr. Oates just so spent that he could not say, ' I have seen a letter under Sir George Wakeman's own hand ' ? "

Scroggs made Lloyd repeat his recollection of the Council meeting. " My lord, I believe Sir Philip Lloyd is mistaken," protested Trusty Titus, and declared that the King had like to have sent him away from the Council once or twice before, finding him so weak. It did not require such a deal of strength to say he had seen a letter, was Scroggs's dry comment. He also pointed out that Wakeman had rightly said that he would not

have been so long at liberty if Oates had brought up the present charge before the Council.

Even in the bare record of *State Trials,* what followed is dramatic :

*Oates :* " To speak the truth, they were such a Council as would commit nobody ! "

*Recorder :* " That was not well said."

*Sir G. Wakeman* : " He reflects on the King and all the Council."

*L. C. J. :* " You have taken a great confidence, I know not by what authority, to say anything of anybody."

From this moment Oates and Scroggs were bitter enemies. The quarrel between Oates and Jeffreys did not yet become violent.

Though Oates did not appear again in person during the trial, his name was frequently mentioned. The accused Corker attacked the character of the Crown witnesses in general, to meet with scant sympathy from the Bench. With reference to one of Oates's imputations, he asked, " What reason had I to tell him a lie ? " " It is a hard matter," said Scroggs, " for us to give account of Jesuits' answers, even to one another," " I am not a Jesuit," said the Benedictine.

Marshal made a good point when he produced as witness for him Ellen Rigby, housekeeper and sole servant at the Benedictine house in the Savoy. She testified that Oates had only been there once, " this summer was twelvemonth," when he came a-begging to Mr. Pickering for charity. Pickering bade her shut the door and never let that man come in again. How improbable it was, said Marshal, that, " in the very heat of the Plot," they should " send him away with a flea in his ear, when he could gain such advantage by discovering us."

However severe they may have been towards the manifestly perjured Oates, neither the Lord Chief Justice nor the Recorder allowed any latitude to Marshal, who was a verbose speaker. " You abound too much in your flowers of rhetoric, which are to no purpose," said Jeffreys. Scroggs jeered constantly at him and his religion while he closed his defence. If the jury found

a man guilty on witnesses' evidence, pleaded Marshal, they took solemnly on their consciences that what the witnesses swore was true. "That they believe they swear true," corrected Scroggs. "Look you, the jury may give a verdict that is false, and yet go according to their consciences. Do you understand that, priest?"

Nevertheless, Scroggs summed up with what appears, to a layman, fairness on this occasion, making points against the weaknesses in the evidence for the prosecution, and especially that of Oates. In conclusion he said: "These men's bloods are at stake, and your souls and mine, and our oaths and consciences, are at stake; and therefore never care what the world says, follow your consciences. . . ."

The jury were away about an hour. When they returned to the court, the foreman asked if they might find the prisoners guilty of misprision of treason. No, answered Jeffreys, it must be high treason or an acquittal. Then it was "Not Guilty," said the foreman. "Down on your knees!" called Captain Richardson, Keeper of Newgate, in charge of the prisoners. "God bless the King and the honourable Bench!" prayed Sir George Wakeman.

## VI

The result of the Wakeman trial was annoying to Oates; but it did not in any way lessen his public fame. In the battle between him and the Lord Chief Justice, the citizens of London without hesitation took Oates's side. In fact, the great mass of opinion throughout England was on the same side, and Scroggs was an object of abuse and insult wherever he went, A common report was that he had taken money from the Roman Catholics to secure Wakeman's acquittal. Oates, on the other hand, was still an idol. His self-confidence was unabated. In the company of Lord Shaftesbury in August he indulged in threats against the Lord Chancellor (whom one might have thought to have been anti-Papist enough to please him), called him a rogue, and said, "I shall stick as close to him as the shirt on his back!" "I

shall see thee Bishop of Winchester or Canterbury before I die," remarked Shaftesbury admiringly.

Smith, the schoolmaster, who relates this anecdote, describes the company which thronged Oates's chamber in Whitehall about this period. There were Mr. Wilson and Mr. Snow, who had a post at the House of Lords, continually singing bawdy and treasonable songs against the King. Other frequenters were Aaron Smith, a lawyer and a Green Ribbon Club member, whom William of Orange afterwards honoured with the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; William Smith, Fifth Monarchy man and informer[1]; Richard Halford, the Leveller; Sir Henry Ingoldsby, and other choice spirits. Oates's clerk, William Dalby took his part in the disloyal conversation, and often said: "This Popish race of the Stuarts must be rooted out; there must be a change." Dalby had once been clerk to the Parliamentarians in Rutland.

Oates himself was busy with his pen, producing at this period two of the most egregious of his pamphlets, *The Pope's Warehouse: or the Merchandise of the Whore of Rome*, and *The Witch of Endor*. But we also see him, in Smith's story, as burning with anxiety to provide himself with a pedigree and a coat of arms. No coat could be found, because Titus "was either the first hero of his family, or the heraulds had been unkind in not transmitting his name and arms to posterity." Finally, through the aid of a Major Fisher, some heralds were induced to produce a coat which they thought no one else could claim, "a chevron between three crosses croslet fitchee," once the coat, says Smith, of "Sir Otes Swinford, husband to the Lady Katherine Swinford, afterwards married to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster." With these arms Oates was very pleased, and he had them displayed on his plate and in a large seal-ring, while he gave the Major 20*s*. for his pains.

We hear of Oates now from a different source; and this time away from his chamber in Whitehall, on a visit to Oxford. As Anthony Wood was resident there, we may presume his story to be correct. Titus's visit seems to have been prompted by his

[1] This appears to have been the William Smith who, in 1662, published *News from Ireland*, touching "the damnable design of the Papists in that kingdom to forge a sham plot upon the Presbyterians." He had posed as a Roman Catholic before becoming an informer. He is the author of the phrase concerning the Jesuits, "these Caterpillars of the Earth."

ardent desire to get himself recognised as a real Doctor of Divinity. Wood had already, at the beginning of 1679, heard a report, which turned out not to be true, that the Duke of Monmouth, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, had got Oates made a D.D. there. Monmouth may have attempted to do so. Now Oates came to try his powers of persuasion on the other University. He arrived in Oxford, or at least was there, with John, Baron Lovelace, a turbulent young adherent of the Country Party. Lovelace took him to the races at Woodstock on Holy-rood Day, September 14th, and, " because he would have company come there to the enriching of the town, caused him to preach on Sunday and Tuesday." Wood thinks that Lovelace did this partly to spite the King and the Lord Treasurer for having taken away from him his office of Ranger.

After the Woodstock races Oates came back into Oxford and sent word to the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Timothy Halton, Provost of Queen's, that he would " come and wait on him, not surprise him, for his degree." This condescension was unavailing. The Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Fell, Dean of Christ Church, informed him that if he was a D.D. of Salamanca they would incorporate him ; but they denied him the degree without proof. Hereupon, says Wood, " he and the citizens say we [the University] are Papists." The Oxford citizens, like those of London, could ill brook a slight put upon their idol.

Wood also tells a story of Oates after his return from Oxford to London. On October 21st, 1679, the " attilery men " gave a feast in Merchant Taylors' Hall, at which the Duke of York was a guest. In the evening, as James was returning home from the feast, Oates and Bedloe, with a great rabble about them, made their appearance in a balcony in Cheapside, belonging to " a blink-eyed bookseller called Cockeril," and cried out, " A Pope, a Pope ! " Their courage soon vanished when one of the Duke's troopers cocked his pistol and rode back, calling, " What factious rogues are these ? " They cried to him : " No Pope, no Pope ! God bless His Highness ! " So, adds Wood, the King's worthy evidence sneaked away.

A few days after this came the discovery of papers in Mrs.

Cellier's meal-tub.[1] Smith seems to have carried the news to Oates. "By the Lord!" exclaimed the Doctor, "they have put those papers in the meal-tub themselves and found them." He was indeed well qualified to talk of discoveries! There was "the shrewd, suspicious face of Truth and Reason," as Smith says, in his attitude over the affair. But the Meal-Tub Plot, as it is sometimes called, had an element in it which might give Oates some qualms. Mrs. Cellier and those behind her were aiming a counter-blow at the persecutors of the Roman Catholics, which, if successful, could not but seriously affect Oates's position.

There is other evidence of Mrs. Cellier's intention of striking at Oates. John Lane, a servant who had been discharged by him in the spring of this year, was befriended by the scheming lady and, in conjunction with two other serving-men, made charges against Oates and Bedloe. When they said that these two villains had conspired to manufacture false evidence against the fallen Lord Treasurer Danby, they said nothing improbable. When Lane further accused Oates of indecent talk against the King, it is more than likely he was right. He also alleged against him an attempt at an abominable offence. When the last charge came before a jury on November 19th, it failed. Six days later Lane, with Knox, one of his associates—the third having disappeared—was brought up for trial for conspiracy to defame Oates and Bedloe. Both were convicted and punished, and the credit of Oates and Bedloe stood higher than ever with the public

It was soon after this that Oates brought his mother and father up from Hastings to spend Christmas with him, lodging them in York Buildings. Smith the schoolmaster dined with them one day. Being left alone with the old lady, he was asked by her "what he thought of Titus and this business." "Very well," pretended Smith. "Indeed I do not like it well," said the anxious mother. "Pray God bless him!" She then went on to give that description of Titus in his childhood which we heard at the beginning of this book.

The good lady might well not like the business. Titus continued to carry himself very high, and at the beginning of 1680

[1] See p. 164.

he and Bedloe decided to avenge themselves on the Lord Chief Justice for his attitude toward them at various recent trials. They were emboldened by the knowledge that they had public opinion behind them, and the full support of the Country Party. Lord Shaftesbury had not hesitated to show Scroggs what he thought of him. At a dinner given by the Lord Mayor in December he had drunk to the health of " the old Lord Chief Justice." Did he mean Sir Matthew Hale's? enquired Scroggs. " No, but yours before Wakeman's trial," Shaftesbury replied.

Scroggs, whatever else he was, a libertine, a bully, and an unscrupulous abuser of his judicial powers, was no coward. He had made quite a dignified defence of his conduct in a speech at the opening of the Michaelmas Term, October 23rd, 1679, affirming his continued belief in the existence of the Plot. " I freely and heartily declare," he said, " I will never be a Papist nor a rebel." But he had no apologies to make for what had happened at the Wakeman trial. Now when " Dr." Oates and " Captain " Bedloe in early January came to the Privy Council with thirteen articles they had drawn up against him he met them without fear.

Among their accusations were that he had set at liberty several persons accused upon oath of high treason (they were alluding particularly to the release on bail, the previous July, of Pepys and Sir Anthony Deane) ; that he had impugned their evidence and misdirected the jury in the Wakeman trial ; that he had told the King they " always had an accusation against anybody " ; that he was " very much addicted to swearing and cursing in his common discourse " ; and that he drank to excess—Oates professing to believe he should be able to prove that " my Lord Chief Justice danced naked."

Scroggs put in a prompt answer to these articles, and the matter came up before the King and Council on January 21st, when his vindication of himself was held to be perfectly satisfactory. A newsletter of January 22nd gives an amusing story of his response to a specific charge by Oates that he had been drunk in the company of a person of quality. Who was that person? asked Scroggs. Lord Shaftesbury, replied Oates. He

had only once dined in Shaftesbury's company, Scroggs asseverated, and that was at the Lord Mayor's. He might possibly then have taken a cup too much, in Mr. Oates's judgment. Oates snatched at this as a confession, when Scroggs went on to explain he had raised his cup to the health of H.R.H. (the Duke of York) after His Majesty's, and that might be a cup too much in Mr. Oates's judgment!

The Court party refused to abandon Scroggs to the wolves; and several blows for the engineers of the Plot followed, notably the conviction and punishment of the publisher of Charles Blount's furious pamphlet, *An Appeal from the Country to the City*; the acquittal of Sir Thomas Gascoigne, a prominent Yorkshire Romanist; and the throwing out by a Middlesex grand jury of a bill against Lady Powis, accused of high treason. Against these the Whigs had a success to set in the conviction of two persons, Tasborough and Mrs. Price, whom Dugdale charged with attempting to suborn him to perjure himself by contradicting his evidence at the trial of the Five Jesuits. At another trial, not directly connected with the Plot, Oates had the satisfaction of helping to bring six unhappy priests to death, including William Marshal and James Corker, who had previously eluded his grasp. These priests were prosecuted at the Old Bailey on January 17th under the old statute, 27 *Eliz. cap.* 2, convicted of high treason for being Romish priests, as Oates and other witnesses proved, sentenced to death, and executed.

The tide, however, was still running fairly strongly against Trusty Titus, in spite of the continued popular esteem for his character. In two trials in June Court influence prevailed. Only in the second of these was Oates directly concerned; but that was a very important test for him.

On the 11th of the month Mrs. Cellier, accused of high treason, was acquitted.[1] Twelve days later, the Earl of Castlemaine was, like her, brought up at the King's Bench, and again the charge was high treason. Oates was the first witness against him, and told the familiar tales of the letters he had carried, the Consult of April 1678, the treasonable conversations he had heard, and so

[1] See p. 177.

on. He would not directly accuse Castlemaine of having been present at the Consult, but he alleged his approval of the plan to kill the King. " Now he should be avenged for the injuries done to him," he made him say, one night in Fenwick's chamber at Wild House. He also represented him as attempting, at great expense, to get a divorce from his wife, the former Royal mistress. Castlemaine, an able pleader, put him through a severe examination, and owing to his position secured respect from the Bench ; though at the same time Scroggs refused to allow Oates's credit as witness to be lessened by what had happened at the Parker case four years before. Oates was King's evidence, and, despite their personal enmity, Scroggs continued to protect him.

With Dangerfield it was a different matter. Against Mrs Cellier his evidence had been rejected, because he was shown to have been convicted of a felony not covered by the terms of his pardon, and he was sent to prison. In the interval between the Cellier and Castlemaine trials this had been put right, to the extent of making Dangerfield an admissible witness. But Scroggs, though he could in his summing-up find " nothing infamous proved against Mr. Oates," felt bound to refer to the " six great enormous crimes " proved by the defence against Dangerfield, and left it to the jury to consider what importance they should attach to his evidence. The verdict was for Lord Castlemaine's acquittal.

Undeterred by this, Oates, only three days after the Castlemaine trial, showed himself in a still bolder attitude than ever before. On June 26th he accompanied Lord Shaftesbury and a considerable number of lords and commoners of the Country Party to Westminster Hall to present the Duke of York as a " Popish Recusant." Earlier in his public career Oates had been careful to do no more than insinuate cautiously against James ; and the latter's return from Scotland four months earlier had not made the attack on him easier. But, according to William Smith, Oates was now in the habit of paying frequent visits to Shaftesbury, who urged him to swear against the Duke. L'Estrange says that Oates would call him " a rascal " and " a traitor," and indulge in such expressions as " He shall be hanged " or " I shall live to

see him hanged." Yet some writers appear to think that James II., when he became King, exhibited a vindictive spirit against Titus Oates!

Scroggs headed off the attack against the Duke by discharging the jury before whom Shaftesbury, Oates and company made their charge; and a speedy sign of the Royal displeasure was shown when the pension which Oates had been receiving was reduced to 40*s.* instead of £12 a week, Bedloe's being cut down simultaneously from £10 to 40*s.*, and Dugdale's and Dangerfield's from £5 and 40*s.* respectively to nothing at all. The plea of the Treasury was the necessity of retrenchment.

There were protests by some of the Whig peers, who offered to pay the informers' pensions themselves, if they might do so without offence to the Crown. Obviously Oates could not yet be got rid of entirely; but the crisis of the Plot was approaching, and King Charles was feeling his way towards freedom from its tentacles. Also the mad frenzy of religious bigotry was abating a little. There were victims still to be offered up; but they were comparatively few.

On August 20th Bedloe died at Bristol, almost in the odour of sanctity, leaving behind, as we have already said, a statement in which he swore to the truth of all his evidence, and declared his conscience clear and himself ready to "appear cheerfully before the Lord of Hosts." This pious document was later read out in the House of Commons, who, to show their approval, expelled two members who ventured to express disbelief in the Plot.

If Oates had early intelligence of his ally's death, he does not seem to have exhibited much grief. William Smith records meeting him, about Bartholomew-tide, at the Crown Tavern without Temple Bar. He was with his brother Sam, and they were going to a "treat" given by Alderman Willcocks. (Though Smith does not mention it, this seems to have been the occasion when Oates and Dr. Tonge had a violent dispute as to who was the real discoverer of the Plot, which must have rather spoilt the treat!) In the City Oates was still a power, and extraordinary tales were believed about him, such as that he was about to marry Lord Shaftesbury's niece, with his lordship's consent.

An example of the danger of trying to discredit him was given on September 24th, when Simpson Tonge was arrested and thrown into Newgate for having defamed the King's evidence. This young man's attitude is enigmatical ; and Mr. Seccombe's theory is that he was really a tool in Oates's hands, with a view to trepanning L'Estrange, and accusing him of suborning evidence to invalidate the Protestant witnesses. It is difficult to decide. Simpson certainly sought out L'Estrange in August or early September and, with his charges against his father and Oates of having, between them, concocted the Plot, induced that usually astute person to accept him as a friend ; and he appeared before the Privy Council to make his accusations.

Oates immediately sent in a petition against Simpson Tonge. In a week's time there were rumours of the young man's confession of contrivance of a design against his father and Oates. He was sent to Newgate, on Oates's charge ; but the rumours turned out to be true, for he was ready now to produce a tale to Oates's liking.

A furious pamphlet-duel had for many months been proceeding between Oates's party and Sir Roger. The two men were mouthpieces, as it were, of their respective sides, for whom they coined the phrases and the catchwords. Oates is said to have been largely instrumental in popularising the name " Tories " for his opponents. But he did more than call them names ; and in the struggle between Oates and L'Estrange it was Oates who got in the first serious blow.

L'Estrange relates that he was walking one day, apparently in September 1680, across the outer court at Whitehall, " innocently upon my business," when he saw Oates. " And because I did not cap him over the square, as the boys do Fellows at Cambridge, ' Squire L'Estrange, ' says he, ' we shall have a Parliament ! ' twisting his hat about betwixt his fingers and his thumb, with a look and action not to be expressed."

" We shall have a Parliament." This was Oates's favourite cry. He did not, however, wait for Parliament's meeting before striking at L'Estrange. He went to the Privy Council and denounced him for tampering with Simpson Tonge to defame the

King's evidence. On October 6th Sir Roger was brought before the Council, where he was confronted by Oates and the two Tonges. Very high words arose. L'Estrange told the Council, says the diarist Luttrell, that " Dr. Oates took the liberty to call him a thousand times Rogue and Rascal, which the Doctor owned, saying he would prove him to be both, and desired he might be secured."

The wavering tale of Simpson Tonge, however, did not impress the Council favourably. They told Oates to formulate his charges against L'Estrange within the next week ; and on October 13th the examination was resumed. The King was strongly in favour of L'Estrange, whose innocence in the matter of Simpson Tonge was established. Another charge by Oates, of being " Popishly affected," was also dismissed, although Prance and others were brought forward to swear that they had seen L'Estrange at mass in Somerset House.

The attack through the Privy Council had failed ; but there was Oates's " Parliament " still. Led by Shaftesbury, the House of Lords recommended that L'Estrange should be deprived of his posts and never be employed again in public affairs. An order for his arrest followed ; but he had already fled to join the Duke of York in exile in Edinburgh, whence he passed on to The Hague. Oates was temporarily triumphant. Sir Roger was down, and almost out.

Simpson Tonge was now openly one of Oates's supporters, and supplied with funds through his uncle, Captain Tonge.[1] On December 18th he lost his father, whose evil career was crowned by an impressive funeral, followed by " many of the godly party " from Blackfriars to his church of St. Michael's, Wood Street. But the old man's hand is thought to be visible in a work which appeared in the following February, *The Narrative and Case of Simson Tonge, Gent.*, which professed to be " a true account delivered upon oath before Mr. Justice Bridgeman, in the presence of Dr. Tytus Oates." In this a violent attack was made upon

[1] A year later Simpson Tonge, then in the King's Bench prison, wrote to the restored L'Estrange, asking his forgiveness, which Sir Roger granted ; and he followed this up with a petition to the King, in which he alleged that his uncle had made him drunk and so induced him to give false evidence. The truth, he now asserted, was what he had previously spoken against Oates and his father !

L'Estrange, Mrs. Cellier, and the enemies of the Plot in general. Pending the return of L'Estrange to his literary labours, the Whigs had the better of the battle of words.

We must now return to the last months of 1680, when Oates had two more notable successes to enjoy. Mrs. Cellier's second trial, in September, when she was convicted of libel, and sentenced to the pillory and a heavy fine, is dealt with elsewhere.[1] It may be noted that Oates just about this time was complaining to the Privy Council of the very great number of Irish priests lately come to town, and of the walks of St. James's Park being so full of them that he thought himself in another country and durst not show himself there for danger of his life.

The brave soul, however, was not wanting when the time at last came for the martyrdom of poor old Lord Stafford, a man who, according to Lord Ailesbury, "would have trembled at the sight of a sword," but whom Oates accused of having received a commission as Paymaster-General of the Forces under the intended Popish Government, and being deep in the plot to kill the King and subvert the country. With Arundel, Bellasyse, Petre, and Powis, he had been in custody since October 1678. Now, on November 10th, 1680, the House of Commons unanimously resolved to prosecute "the Lords in the Tower" and to begin with William, Viscount Stafford. They sent to the House of Lords, desiring them to appoint a convenient day for the trial, a platform was erected in Westminster Hall, and on November 30th proceedings began, with Lord Chancellor Finch as Lord High Steward, and all the Court present to watch events.

The representatives of the House of Commons opened their case, and Oates was their third witness, after John Smith, a scoundrelly priest, or ex-priest, and Dugdale, whose name needs no further qualification from us. Oates was at his wordiest, and was allowed to take his own way. He began with the period of his employment in the Duke of Norfolk's household and told of his encounters with many Roman Catholic priests, who warned him that the Protestant religion was upon its last legs, and that it would become him and all men of his coat to hasten betimes

[1] See p. 182

home to the Church of Rome. After the story of his conversion by the "saintlike" Hutchinson, he came to his experiences abroad, and so gradually to the Plot. Of this his account was general, with no mention of Stafford, who accordingly asked him no questions when his preliminary evidence concluded. "I am not concerned," he rightly remarked.

A witness having testified to knowing Oates in Spain, there followed Jennison, whose brother the priest had died in Newgate the previous year. He told of his first seeing Oates in Ireland's room, when he was informed that he was "Mr. Oates, a parson newly come over to them, a brisk jolly man, and worthy your acquaintance." He swore to having seen him in Town at the period of the Consult.

On the second day of the trial Dugdale was put up again, and now swore that, while he was a servant at Lord Aston's at Tixhall, Staffordshire, in 1678, he had heard Stafford consent to a resolution to kill the King. On this statement "a great hum" arose in Westminster Hall, and the Lord High Steward felt compelled, like many a modern judge, to say, "Let us not carry it as if we were in a theatre!"

Dugdale went on, implicating the accused very deeply in the Plot, and resisted Stafford's attempts to pin him down as to dates. Then Oates came forward again and definitely charged Stafford with having, in Fenwick's chamber in Drury Lane, received a commission as Paymaster to the army which was to be raised in the Roman Catholic interest; and also with having known of Grove's design, and having himself said about the King, "He hath deceived us a great while, and we can bear no longer."

Edward Turberville was the last of the main witnesses for the prosecution. This man was an ex-Romanist from Glamorganshire, and had once been gentleman-usher to Lady Mary Molineux, daughter of Lord Powis. His accession to the ranks of the informers is apparently to be explained by the base motive of the informer's reward. It was said that Dr. William Lloyd, who had converted him, had pressed him as to whether among the Papists he had heard any talk of plots against the King. This suggestion and the sight of the money made by Oates, Dugdale, Prance,

and the rest of the gang no doubt inflamed his cupidity. As we shall see, he did not long remain in Oates's company. His evidence now was to the effect that Stafford had personally urged him to assassinate the King.

On the third day of the trial, December 2nd, the sixty-nine-year-old Stafford began the heavy task of his defence against all these lies. His main attack was concentrated on the evidence of Dugdale. He showed that, whereas this fellow had assigned his approval of Charles's murder to the end of August or some, obviously early, day in September 1678, he had not really gone to Tixhall till September 12th. He told of the dislike with which Dugdale had inspired him, making it impossible that he should have approached him about the murder. Even when " very dry " at Lord Aston's table, he had never called Dugdale to serve him with a drink. " I did detest him as so mean a knave that I refused to take drink at his hands." He was forced, however, to admit that on the morning of September 20th (which was the date on which Dugdale now consented to fix as the day when Stafford had offered him £500 for the assassination) Dugdale had been in his bedroom, having come to beg him to get Lord Aston's leave for him to attend a race-meeting. Stafford was interested in horse-racing himself, and agreed to ask Lord Aston. But he called his own body-servant to prove that he had had no private conversation with Dugdale.

Stafford called other evidence, to show Dugdale's bad character. It was testified that, when he was dismissed from Aston's service for dishonesty at the end of November or beginning of December 1678, and had been arrested by the watch for a debt, upon Aston refusing to do anything for him he had sworn to have revenge. Again, meeting a former fellow-servant, he had told him, " It is reported I shall be a peacher ! " This was three or four days before he actually began to " peach."

Witnesses came forward to say that Dugdale had tried to bribe them to swear against Stafford ; and the magistrates before whom Dugdale had appeared on his arrest, to state that he had then sworn he knew nothing of the Plot. Altogether, though the prosecution called counter-witnesses to discredit Stafford's, the

old man, unprovided as he was with counsel, fairly succeeded in tearing Dugdale's evidence to pieces.

He then turned his attention to Oates, but found him less easy to deal with than Dugdale. Oates stuck to his story, and it was a question of his word against Stafford's protestations that he knew neither him nor Fenwick. On the opening of the trial's fourth day he was reduced to making a long harangue on the vileness of Oates's religious dissimulation. To this subject he returned again in his closing speech next day. Oates's attitude over his former pretence of being a Roman Catholic, he said, showed no repentance, but was rather " an impudent affronting of God Almighty " ; and he appealed to their lordships and the whole Christian world whether he was a fit witness.

Sir William Jones, Attorney-General and leader of the committee of management for the prosecution, and Powle, another of the managers, replied, asking for a verdict of guilty. On the sixth day of the trial, Monday, December 6th, a petition from the accused was read, that he might be allowed to speak again. Permission was granted, and once more he pleaded his innocence in a long speech, to which the prosecution made a short reply. Next day, December 7th, the peers delivered their verdict, fifty-five voting for condemnation and thirty-one for acquittal. The Lord High Steward pronounced the usual ghastly sentence for high treason, but added that the Lords would sue the King to remit " all but the taking off his head "—whereat the poor old man wept tears of gratitude. On December 29th Stafford's head fell on the scaffold at Tower Hill. Having made so glorious an example of him, the Commons did not proceed with the prosecution of his four companions, who remained in the Tower until June 1685 saw them set at liberty.

We have dealt but briefly with this long trial, about which a whole book could easily be written. But enough has probably been given to bring out the horror that it should have been possible for Oates and his friends—well summarised by L'Estrange as " the Refuse of Pillories and Jayls, the Scandal of Christianity, and the Shame of Mankind "—with their monstrous lies to swear away the life of a perfectly innocent man, whose harmless life

was already close to what should have been its peaceful end. There was greater atrocity, no doubt, in the deaths of other victims of the Plot. But somehow a peculiar pathos attaches to the martyrdom of Stafford, which makes us read almost unmoved of the three thousand stripes laid on the hideous Salamanca Doctor four years later.

The conviction and execution of Stafford appeared even to have strengthened Oates's position ; for the trial had been carried through in direct defiance of the King's wishes. His pension was raised to £3 a week. His popularity with the House of Commons and in Whig London was enhanced, and he was in great request as a preacher in the City churches. It looked as if " Oates's reign," as L'Estrange calls it, might continue for many years more. But there was a force beneath the surface which neither he nor his supporters suspected, which was only waiting a favourable opportunity to show itself ; and this was the force of Charles's character, never so strongly exhibited as in the early months of 1681.

At first Oates seemed to be on his way to a triumph probably even dearer to him than the death of any Papist. On January the Commons voted the impeachment of the Lord Chief Justice. In the previous session eight articles of impeachment had been brought in, alleging various abuses, including the openly defaming and scandalising several of the witnesses at the Plot trials. The Commons now sent these articles up to the Lords. There a check was encountered ; for their lordships declined to consider an address to the King to suspend Scroggs from his duties until his trial should be over.

Scroggs was not the only target of the Lower House's shafts. A number of other judges and public men were assailed for insufficient belief in the Plot ; and a determined effort was made to force through Parliament the Exclusion Bill against the Duke of York, which the Lords had rejected the previous November by a two-to-one vote. The situation was so serious that Charles prorogued Parliament on January 10th, and eight days later dissolved it, at the same time intimating that the next would meet at Oxford, not Westminster, on March 21st.

Both sides at once prepared for a fight to a finish, and a " wild and whirling " General Election followed. But the very violence of feeling on the part of the extremists led to greater caution among those who tried to hold the balance. This is well illustrated in a letter written in February by the sage Lord Halifax to his brother Henry Savile. Though professing himself " a man that is grown famous for giving ill counsel," he advised his junior not to declare himself too positively of any party. " I do not mean to unfix your Protestantship," he wrote, " but in problems of State . . . do not deserve the good opinion of one side so entirely as to forfeit your credit with the other."

Oates was, of course, in no position to follow Halifax's advice. His credit was entirely with one side, and that soon to be the losing side. His ferocity, however, was unabated as he set out for Oxford, if we may judge from a remark attributed to one of his servants, Nicholson, by William Smith. Nicholson, who had been a trooper in the Parliamentary Army, was fitting up his master's pistols preparatory to the journey. " Come, come," he exclaimed, " we shall have occasion for these before we come back again from Oxford. I shall be once again on horseback. I would I were twenty years younger ! "

Riots at least, and, at the worst, on the one side massacre, on the other rebellion, were feared in Oxford; and Oates was in the fashion in going armed for the opening of Parliament there. But the Government had taken precautions to prevent the rioting reaching the point of bloodshed. The idea of a massacre by the Papists, fostered by Oates and his friends, was but a bogey. A display of military force banished revolutionary ardour. Charles, indeed, had the situation well in hand. He opened Parliament on March 21st, and, finding the new House of Commons no better than the last and equally set on an Exclusion Bill, dissolved it in a week. He had done with Parliaments for the rest of his reign. Seeing the temper of his last three, even many Whig writers of to-day do not censure him severely for this, fiercely as he was assailed for it at the time and for many years after his death.

To Oates, of course, the absence of his beloved Parliament was

a complete disaster. From the first day of his "discovery" the House of Commons had been his shield against all attacks. The citizens of London still remained his; but their power to cover him was nothing like that of the Commons. Henceforth, until the Revolution, his appearance on one side in a court of law was an omen of defeat for that side, if not at once, at any rate in the end.

One of the affairs to which the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament had put a finish was the impeachment of Sir William Scroggs. It was a narrow escape. Scroggs had thought it wise to absent himself from the Bench since the beginning of 1681; and, when he put in his answer at Oxford to the articles against him, the Commons proceeded in their most truculent mood to demand impeachment. The dissolution stopped this. Nevertheless, Charles played cautiously and relieved the Lord Chief Justice of his post, though showing his real sentiments by granting him a handsome retiring pension. In his place he appointed Sir Francis Pemberton, who had not yet incurred public hatred.

There were two trials coming on, in which the Government wished, as far as possible, to avoid the appearance of forcing convictions, so as not unduly to inflame the extreme Protestants. The first was that of Edward Fitzharris, whose real attitude toward the Plot is even more puzzling than that of some of the other informers. The story is a long one, and there is no room for it here. There was a libel written, called *The True Englishman*, demanding Charles's deposition and James's exclusion from the throne. This was either a genuine Whig plot, or an attempt to entangle the leading Whigs by depositing copies of the libel at their houses and having them subsequently discovered there. After long wranglings on a technical point (Fitzharris having been impeached by the Oxford Parliament as author of the libel) the trial came on before Pemberton at the King's Bench on June 9th. Oates was called by Fitzharris to prove that not he but one Edmond Everard had written *The True Englishman*. Everard, alleged Oates, had told him at Oxford that the affair was a design against the dissenting lords and commoners, behind which was the influence of King and Court.

Oates had assured Mrs. Fitzharris that " they would bring her husband off." But Pemberton would have none of his evidence, while upholding Everard's for the prosecution. Fitzharris was convicted, and on July 1st he was executed at Tyburn, after receiving absolution from an Anglican minister. There died with him Oliver Plunket, Roman Catholic Primate of Ireland, the last direct victim of the Popish Plot story. Oates had not been called upon to lie against any of the Irish prisoners ; but the Crown evidence was all from men who had been inspired by his example.

It is reported that the result of Fitzharris's execution was that the Protestants grumbled that " those that set him on work were concealed, and never like to be discovered now he was dead."

The other trial was much plainer and more straightforward than Fitzharris's. Stephen College was one of those firebrands who had ridden fully armed to Oxford in March to attempt to stir up trouble against the Roman Catholics and the Government. He had long been regarded with disfavour in Court circles. A man of about forty-six, and by trade a joiner, he had been taken up by Lord William Russell and other Whigs, and encouraged to exercise a talent which he had for writing ferocious pasquinades, directed against the Duke of York, Scroggs, and others whom the Whigs loved not. It was at his house in London that Dr. Tonge had died. By his conduct at Oxford he gave the Government the opportunity for which they were looking ; but they did not act until after Fitzharris's conviction. Then, on June 29th, College was seized, examined, and committed to the Tower. On July 8th he was indicted at the Old Bailey for sedition.

London juries, however, were in the hands of the Whigs, and the only result of the indictment was an *ignoramus*. Not to be beaten, the Crown took the case to Oxford, the scene of College's offence, and on August 17th the trial came on at the Court House. Oates hurried up to Oxford to testify for the defence, which was in sore straits by the desertion of Dugdale and Turberville from the True Protestant ranks. They saw more money now on the other side and, not being so deeply committed as Oates, found it

possible to change over. They were the chief witnesses as to College's treasonable conversation. Oates, on the other hand, was the chief witness for the defence, and strove hard to shake the credit of his former allies ; but he now found what a difference it made to be against the Crown.

Among other things to which Oates testified against Turberville was that, meeting him in London one day before the trial, Turberville had threatened to break the head of anyone who should say he was to be a witness against College. At a second meeting, however, when Oates asked him if he had anything against College, Turberville exclaimed : " The Protestant citizens have deserted us ! God damn me, I will not starve ! " Turberville denied this conversation, whereupon Oates asserted, " Upon the honour of a priest, what I say is true ! " It may be noted that the Rev. Titus was, for all his Protestantship, a great stickler for the name of priest.

Against Dugdale, Oates brought an unpleasant charge, which, strangely, seems to have been true, that when he pretended once he had been poisoned by enemies he was in reality suffering from a very different malady. He also taxed him with indecent talk, which, again, is probably true.

The Crown made much of the fact that Oates had previously been helped by the testimony of the men he now assailed ; and the Solicitor-General, in his closing speech, observed : " This looks as if the Doctor were again returning to St. Omer, that he is thus going about to disparage the evidence of Mr. Dugdale, which in great measure verified the truth of that discovery himself first made of the Popish Plot."

College was convicted and sentenced to death. Oates returned to London the next afternoon, and Smith has a tale of him on his arrival, how he laid him down on the chairs in his chamber at Whitehall and ejaculated : " Oh, there is a great man fallen this day in Israel ! I wish I may lay down my life in so just a cause. He is his country's martyr ! Well, well ! we may now see how the game is like to go. Our Master is resolved to bring in Popery. No man ever had such foul play as this poor College. All the true Protestants will be murdered thus, one after another."

This is an interesting picture of Oates in a sanctimonious mood, of which we have fewer examples than of Oates as a blasphemer, Oates as a truculent liar, or Oates as a cynical blackmailer and persecutor.

It is of the man in the last aspect that we get a glimpse in another of Smith's stories of about the same period. This shows him wreaking ruin upon Dr. John Goad, of Merchant Taylors' School. Oates's attack upon Goad was of a baseness well in keeping with his general conduct. He had, perhaps, no special cause for gratitude towards the headmaster of a school from which he had been expelled. But Goad was a man of upright character, for whom William Smith professes a great veneration, calling him also " the best friend I have ever found."

The attack was begun, not by Oates, but by some fanatical members of the Merchant Taylors' Company, who got hold of a catechism used in the lower forms of the school. The book was dedicated to, and licensed by, the Archbishop of Canterbury ; but in the commentary Goad's enemies professed to detect Popery. After calling Goad before them, they took the matter to Oates, Ferguson, and other likely patrons. Oates thought it a good idea to send for Smith, and asked him to testify to Goad being a Papist. Smith refused, saying that it would be the greatest piece of ingratitude in Oates to act against Goad. Oates was surprised. " I did not spare you, who were my master too," he remarked, " and therefore why should I spare him ? " Goad was not spared, but was ejected from the school of which he had been headmaster for twenty years. As he afterwards, in James's reign, professed himself a Roman Catholic, no doubt his enemies considered that their action had been justified.

It was very probably the persecution of Dr. Goad that impelled Smith to break entirely with Oates. On September 19th he went to Sir Leoline Jenkins and deposed before him " an honest account of the things I heard and saw." This deposition he published afterwards with his *Intrigues of the Popish Plot*, from which we have quoted much. In his deposition he spares Oates as little as in the *Intrigues*. " Doctor Oates," he told Jenkins, " hath

in my hearing, I believe, a hundred times affirmed very peremptorily that the Supream Power was in the People, that the King was but the People's Servant and Steward, that the People had the Power to depose him and set up another when they pleased ; that the King was as deep in the Plot and was as Errant [*sic*] a Papist as his brother ; that the King had suborned witnesses to stifle the Popish Plot and to throw it upon the Protestants."

Oates may have made such remarks in Smith's hearing " a hundred times." By the time that Smith made his deposition, Oates was likely to be feeling less reason than ever for constraint in his language against the Royal brothers ; for he had been evicted from his rooms in Whitehall. As early as the end of June there were significant rumours about. A news-letter reports him as having been summoned before the Council at Hampton Court, there being an information against him for blasphemy. This information was a fact. On July 10th Edmond Warcup, J.P., wrote to Lord Conway that two witnesses testified to Oates having denied the godhead of Christ ; and he believed that he had himself heard Oates do so, at the Royal Coffee-house.

On July 22nd Warcup took the deposition of a man called Haines, who said that Oates, College, and others had often declared that, if ever a Parliament sat again, Pemberton and Warcup should be hanged. A case was being worked up for the prosecution of Oates, which did not yet mature. But on September 1st Black Rod called at his lodgings, with a warrant from the Lord Chamberlain for him to remove from Whitehall. Oates immediately complied. According to a newsletter a few days later, the King said to him on parting : " Mr. Oates, I am assured that you have so far forgot your duty to me as to be guilty, since your pardon, of several high crimes and misdemeanours against me ; I will not say of treason, though I believe as much, and I have good reason for my belief. However, I forgive you again, and leave you above board ; but if you are any more faulty I shall spare you no more than any of the rest of my subjects "— and so they parted.

At the same time that he was evicted from Whitehall, Oates's

pension, which, after the Oxford Parliament, had been reduced to £2 weekly, was entirely cut off. He moved to Broad Street, where no doubt his well-wishers in the City supplied him with money. But a sign of his impoverishment is a petition from his brother Sam to the King, begging for employment either at sea or on land. Titus, he said, had sent for him soon after the discovery of the Plot and had promised to get him a command at sea. But he had only entertained him as one of his servants, in consequence of which he and his family were totally ruined.

In his lodgings in Broad Street Titus Oates, to the best of his ability, continued his denunciations of Roman priests. He would, indeed, have gone further, if he had been allowed. At the Middlesex quarter sessions of November 1681 an indictment was preferred, at his request, against Sir Thomas Preston and other Jesuits; but Oates had desired to include in the indictment the name of Lord Howard of Escrick, and charged the court's officer with having stolen the bill against him. As it was not produced, he now declared that he knew nothing against the accused priests, and refused to corroborate the evidence of Dugdale and another witness, Powell, described in a newsletter as "a man of ill-fame."

The curious balance of affairs was shown at these quarter sessions. The Government had at last felt itself strong enough to proceed to a long desired indictment of Lord Shaftesbury for high treason, and on November 24th the bill was before the Middlesex grand jury. But the Whig leader had no warmer friends in the whole country than a Middlesex jury, and the result was an *ignoramus*. We read that the acclamations at the Old Bailey lasted over an hour, and that Titus Oates went shouting along the streets, "An *ignoramus*! Why do you not cry out *ignoramus, ignoramus*?"

This action of the grand jury secured Shaftesbury's retreat, and enabled him ultimately to make his way to Holland and die unpunished for his crimes. But his party was temporarily crushed, and capable only of spasmodic action, until the less able leaders whom Shaftesbury had left behind him blundered into the criminal intrigue of the Rye House Plot, and paid the

penalty with some of their lives. From this disaster the Whigs did not recover till James II. furnished them with the opportunity.

Oates's connection with the more violent part of the Whig programme is not clear. L'Estrange would certainly have established it if he had been able.[1] But, while he successfully proved that Oates was a tool of Shaftesbury in the development of the Popish Plot story, he failed to implicate him in the Rye House affair. What Oates was brought to book for later was, first, his campaign against the Duke of York, and, secondly, his perjury at the trials of 1678–81. We may perhaps take it that he was kept out of the real conspiracy because he was obviously unfit to be trusted with the secret. As a forger and a lying witness he was useful ; as a high conspirator, not.

Of course, such a schemer of evil as Oates could not remain inactive. But, without his Government pension, and with his principal supporter removed, he found small scope for his talents. A strange little affair at the beginning of 1682 saw him worsted in a struggle with a man whom he had thought to put out of the way. A certain Adam Elliot had been a student with him at Caius College. What reason Oates had for disliking him is not known, but there was evidently some grudge. Elliot, while travelling abroad in 1670, had fallen into the hands of Moorish pirates. He escaped, and afterwards was ordained a clergyman of the Church of England. Oates, when at the height of his power, brought an accusation against him of having been not only a Jesuit, but also, while a prisoner of the Moors, a Mohammedan renegade. Elliot was discharged, but on crossing over to Dublin was arrested and fined for having abused Oates. Now, however, in 1682 he in his turn prosecuted Oates for defaming him, and gained the verdict, Oates being fined £20.

The pamphlet-warfare between L'Estrange and Oates was in full swing again, with the advantage much on Sir Roger's side now that his enemy was no longer the protected King's evidence. Ferocious attacks were delivered, notably the *Hue and Cry after Dr. O.*, which went to the limit of personal abuse. Nevertheless,

[1] It was L'Estrange who had worked up the case against Shaftesbury and made the discovery of the papers at his house, which revealed the existence of that treasonable body, "The Association" (see *Brief History*, I., p. 100).

the adherents of the Plot continued to put up a fight, and in June 1682 they scored a success, when those responsible for the publication of *The Loyal Protestant Intelligencer* were tried and convicted for having attempted to prove that Sir Edmund Godfrey had committed suicide, not been murdered. It was not safe, even yet, to cast doubt on the theory of Godfrey's murder by the Papists, and all three accused men were fined, while two of them were also sentenced to the pillory.

The year 1683 passed with very little incident for Titus Oates, though in February he lost his father. Doubtless the excitement over the trial of the Rye House plotters warned him to keep quiet. Genuine treason had been discovered; and Jeffreys, now Lord Chief Justice, was able to tell the jury that "we [the Crown] rake no gaols nor bring any profligate persons" for King's evidence. The old type of witness had no place waiting for him with the prosecution; and with the defence he dared not associate himself.

## VII

It might have been better for Oates if he had continued as quiet as he had been in 1683; though it is not likely, in any event, that he could have postponed by much the punishment he had so amply deserved, now that the Court had tested public opinion and ceased to fear a revival of fanaticism. But he certainly courted his fate when, stung to desperation by the unceasing attacks made on him in print, on February 28th, 1684, he addressed a petition to the King and the Secretary of State against "the scandalous pamphlets of Sir Roger L'Estrange."

Sir Roger had waited patiently for his revenge; not so much his own revenge as that of all the elements in the State which had suffered under the reign of terror started by Oates and Tonge. Now Oates had forced his hand. But he was soon ready to accept the challenge. His friendliness, in spite of a difference of religion, with the Duke of York had led him to work up James's case against Oates with enthusiasm; and when, on May 10th,

Titus was arrested at the Amsterdam Coffee-house, it was in an action brought by the Duke for *scandalum magnatum*.

The action was not contested. When the trial came on in the King's Bench at the end of May the only question was the amount of the damages to be awarded. Plenty of good witnesses appeared to prove that Oates had often called the Duke a traitor, for whom hanging was the fittest fate, etc. One witness testified that Oates, having preached one day at the church in Foster Lane, was invited by the churchwardens to dinner with them. Had any of them ever dined with James, Duke of York, at any of the feasts in the City? demanded Oates. Getting no answer, he remarked that he "would not dine with any man that had eat with the Devil," and went off to get his dinner at a private brasier's by London Wall. "An excellent gospel-preacher, upon my word!" exclaimed Sir George Jeffreys, now Lord Chief Justice, as he heard this tale.

With evidence of this kind before him, and no defence offered, Jeffreys had a simple task in directing the jury, to whom he appealed for "the example to be made as public as can be, in order to satisfy all people what a sort of fellow this defendant is who has been so much adored and looked upon with an eye of admiration, courted with so wonderful an affection, and so (I had almost said) Hosanna'd among people that have been factious and tumultuous to the Government." Very different was the language about Oates of Jeffreys, L.C.J., from that of Jeffreys, Recorder of London!

The jury did their duty and awarded full damages, £100,000, which of course Oates could not pay. In consequence he was thrown into the King's Bench prison, where, though his conviction had only been a civil one, he was put in heavy irons. The death of Charles II. found him still in gaol; but now his real punishment was to begin. Of the leading Popish Plot informers only he and Prance remained to suffer for their crimes. We have heard of Bedloe's death. Turberville had also died, of smallpox, in December 1681, and might have escaped in any case as a reward for having changed sides. Dugdale's death, in *delirium tremens*, took place fifteen years later.

An omen of what was to come for Oates was seen when, on February 11th, only five days after Charles's death, two of his servants, Nicholson and Dalby, were convicted of seditious and scandalous words against the new King, and sentenced to fines and the pillory. Oates himself was brought up at the King's Bench on two successive days, May 8th and 9th, on two charges of perjury, the first in connection with the famous Consult of 1678, the second with the judicial murder of Father Ireland. Great care was taken that he should not escape vengeance. There were rumours that the mastiff guarding his cell-door was found dead, and that a rope-ladder was smuggled in to him the day before the first trial; but he duly appeared in the dock on May 8th, 1685.

The two perjury cases occupy nearly two hundred and forty pages of *State Trials*. We do not propose to wade through the evidence, most of which is a repetition of what we have already heard, with the difference that now the Bench put, or endeavoured to put, the curb upon Oates instead of on his opponents. Even for the truculent Jeffreys, however, this was no easy work. Oates was as verbose as ever, and as determined to tell his story his own way. Also it must be admitted that he exhibited a degree of courage which he had never shown before. A bully in success, but generally so cringing in adversity, now, with his back against the wall, he put up a great fight, in which his long experience in the law courts helped him.

Inch by inch he contested the admissibility of the evidence brought against him, and there were many stout passages of arms between him and Jeffreys and the other judges trying the case. One was when Lord Castlemaine appeared in the box. Oates expressed wonder that Mr. Attorney should bring as evidence men that had malice against him. "Hold your tongue," shouted Jeffreys; "you are a shame to mankind!" "No, my lord, I am neither a shame to myself or mankind. What I have sworn is true, and I will stand by it to my last breath, and seal it, if occasion be, with my blood." "It were pity but that it were to be done by thy blood," came the sneer. Oates was not abashed. "This will not do the work to make the Plot to be disbelieved," he

asserted. " Things are not done by great noises. I will stand by the truth."

Over the witnesses brought from St. Omer to prove that Oates was there on April 24th, 1678, there was a severe struggle. Oates appealed to the court whether a Papist, in case of religion, might be received as a good witness. Sir Francis Withins, one of the judges, enquired, " Do you think you are come here to preach, Mr. Oates ? " and Jeffreys said, " I'll tell you, a Papist, except you'll prove any legal objection against him, is as good a witness in a court of record as any other person whatsoever." Oates endeavoured to cite " my lord Coke's practice, not to admit them as good witnesses." " Do not tell me of my lord Coke's practice," cried Jeffreys ; " the law is otherwise." Oates continuing to urge his right to except against witnesses, Jeffreys suggested that presently he would tell them they had no right to judge. He must keep to the matter in hand and not make idle excursions. Let him not think his impudence would storm them out of their senses !

Oates would not abandon his contention that a Papist was not a good witness, and desired leave to argue it as a point of law. " No, sir, it is no point of law at all," replied Jeffreys. " Then I appeal to all the hearers whether I have justice done me." Jeffreys was roused to fury. " What's that ? Why, you impudent fellow, do you know where you are ? You are in a court of justice and must appeal to none but the court and the jury." " I do appeal to the hearers," Oates persisted. " Take him away there," ordered Jeffreys. Then, turning to Oates, he added, " If you will not behave yourself as you ought, I can assure you the court will do what they ought to do and stop your mouth." He must make his defence as well as he could. " You are here in judgment before us and are to appeal to us. We'll suffer none of your commonwealth appeals to your *mobile* ! "

The Lord Chief Justice, however, did not cause Oates to be removed from court, and the wrangle as to the admissibility of witnesses went on. " I find, my lord," complained Oates, " I am not to be heard in this cause with patience." " I think you do not deserve to be heard at all." This was hyperbolic ; but

Oates could not really complain that he had not been allowed to test the Bench's patience.

Several of the witnesses subpœna'd for the defence did not appear; and Oates complained that they had been "frighted away." His witnesses to prove his presence in London at the time of the Consult were severely handled. Jeffreys in his summing-up destroyed their credit entirely, while pointing out that, if those for the prosecution swore true, "there does not remain the least doubt but that Oates is the blackest and most perjured villain that ever appeared upon the face of the earth." After retiring for about a quarter of an hour only, the jury found Oates guilty.

Next day came the perjury charge in the case of Ireland. Oates's defence was even weaker here, the dice being no longer loaded in his favour, than in the matter of the Consult. The perfectly honest, if sometimes stupid, witnesses who had testified to the Jesuit's movements before were now sympathetically treated. Oates's appeals to what had gone before were in vain. The Lord Chief Justice having declared certain evidence to be "as clear as the sun at noon-day," he protested, "My lord, there was a time when this was not believed." "Ay, Mr. Oates," allowed Jeffreys, "we know there was a time when there were *ignoramus* juries, and things were believed and not believed as the humour went." This piece of evidence, he went on, was so strong that, if he had any sense in the world, Oates must be concerned at it. "Not at all, my lord. I know who they are and what is the end of it all." "Upon my faith," Jeffreys observed, "*I* have so much charity to you, as my fellow-creature, as to be concerned for *you*." Oates did not appear grateful. "It is not two straws' matter," he said, "whether you be or no. I know my own innocency." Thereupon Jeffreys declared him to be "the most obstinately hardened wretch" he had ever seen.

"You must hold your tongue," ordered the judge a moment later. "My lord, I must speak the truth, and I *will* speak the truth." "I think there is scarce a word of truth comes out of thy mouth." "You may think what you will, my lord," replied

Oates boldly ; but he knew, nevertheless, that his position was hopeless. The Crown case was proved to the hilt. Jeffreys was even more severe in his summing-up than on the previous day. Speaking of the rabble who, in the early days of the Plot, used to cry, " Where is the villain that dares come to give evidence against Oates, the Saviour of the Nation ? " he burst forth, " Oh horried blasphemy that no less an epithet should be given to such a profligate wretch as Oates than that which is only proper to Our Blessed Lord ! "

The jury were almost as quick with their verdict as before, and it was again " Guilty." But there was no undue haste to pronounce sentence. Indeed, Oates could not plead that he had not fair treatment, as trials went then. He was allowed time to move in arrest of judgment, and on May 16th his " exceptions " were heard. They were unavailing, and the same day came the sentence. It was Sir Francis Withins who pronounced it ; and, if he did not do so as violently as Jeffreys might have done, he spoke, nevertheless, very incisively. He characterised the offence of which Oates had been doubly convicted as one of the greatest of which the law had cognisance ; and yet to him the penalty for it seemed inadequate. " If we consider those dreadful effects which have followed upon your perjury," he said, " we must conclude our law defective. They are such as no Christian's heart can think of without bleeding for that innocent blood which was shed by your oath ; and every knowing man believes and every honest man grieves for. God be thanked, our eyes are now opened ! "

With reference to Oates's objection to the witnesses against him as being Papists, Withins continued : "That was all you had to say ! You had not one word to justify yourself from that great and heinous perjury you were accused of. I hope I have not been thought a man of ill-nature ; and I confess nothing has been so great a regret to me, in my place and station, as to give judgment and pronounce the sentence of law against my fellow-subjects, my fellow-creatures ; but as to you, Mr. Oates, I cannot say my fellow-Christian."

When he considered Oates's offence, concluded Withins, he

could not say he had any remorse in giving judgment against him —which he proceeded to do, the judgment being as follows :

(1) A fine of one thousand marks on each indictment ;

(2) Oates to be stript of his canonical habit ;

(3) and (4) The pillory for the space of one hour, on each indictment ;

(5) Whippings at the hands of the common hangman, from Aldgate to Newgate and, two days later, from Newgate to Tyburn ; and further, as " annual commemorations " of his offences.

(6) The pillory at Tyburn every April 24th ; at Westminster Hall every August 9th ; at Charing Cross every August 10th ; over against the Temple Gate every August 11th ; and at the Royal Exchange every September 2nd.

" If it had been in my power, I should not have been unwilling to have given judgment of death upon you ; for I am sure you deserve it." Such were the judge's final words before the prisoner was taken away to his cell. On Monday, May 18th, he emerged again to stand for an hour in the pillory outside Westminster Hall ; and on Tuesday he stood another hour by the Royal Exchange. His sufferings in the pillory were limited to such moral and intellectual pain as a man of his character could feel, for the London mob continued sympathetic and refused to throw anything at him—except kind words. It was a marvellous hold that this blackguard had over the citizens of London !

When it came to the whippings, however, Oates could not cheat the stern intention of those who punished him, and special precautions were observed lest his friends should convey poison to his cell. He was to have full measure of the lash. It must be admitted that this part of the penalty was exceedingly brutal, even for a brute. Walking at the tail of a cart from Aldgate to Newgate on May 20th, he received 1,300 strokes from a six-thonged whip wielded by Ketch, the hangman. If the mob called to Ketch to go gently, he had no official instructions to do so, and he did not spare his victim.

From cries Oates turned to bellows, and he swooned with the pain before he reached Newgate. There he lay in his cell until the 22nd, when he was brought out again and whipped all the

TITUS OATES.

*From a rare Print?*

*Ld March 25 1810 by Wm Richardson Jun.r York House Strand*

OATES IN THE PILLORY

[p. 120

way to Tyburn. Though his back, before his second whipping, looked already as if it had been flayed, he is said to have received no less than 1,700 more lashes. He must have had an extraordinarily vigorous frame to survive. There was indeed a rumour that he had died in gaol, but it proved false. He was, however, ten weeks in the surgeon's hands. In after years he alleged, in his furious pamphlet *Account of the late King James*, that James had sent some of his "cut-throat crew" to pull off the plasters which had been applied by the surgeon to his back; a story which those who impute to James a delight in cruelty will believe. But Oates waited a good many years before making the charge.

Honestly, however, it cannot be said that the man who was responsible for the agonising deaths of so many innocent persons deserved to be treated with mercy by James and his advisers. It might have been humaner to execute him; but that was not allowed by law, upon the charge on which he was so justly convicted. It was necessary to make an example of him. Can tears be spared for the flayed back of a Titus Oates?

In comparison with Oates, no doubt, Prance got off very lightly. Pleading guilty on June 15th to the charges brought against him of perjury, he was sentenced to a fine of £100, three pillories, and a whipping. James remitted the whipping, which he ought not to have done, according to the same critics who object to the severity of Oates's castigation. Prance, however, was a lesser criminal than Oates, and had only come into the conspiracy of the Plot when Oates and Tonge had already launched it. Also, Prance professed to be penitent, and his admission of perjury at the Godfrey murder trial was a source of much gratification to all those who wished to wipe out the stain of that verdict. Prance deserved a much heavier punishment than he got. But that does not show that Oates was over-punished.

For the whole of James's reign Oates remained in gaol. He was moved to the King's Bench prison, and in 1688 an extraordinary tale was current that he had had a child by the bed-making woman there. Whatever else he did, he found time while a prisoner to produce one of his lurid pamphlets, full of

stories of " Popish pranks." It does not look as if he was treated with exceptional severity in prison. He came out duly for his " annual commemorations " in the pillory ; but these served to keep him in the recollection of his London friends, who sent him gifts to ease his sufferings.

The arrival in England of William of Orange and the flight of James brought relief to Titus Oates as to many other bright spirits. A free man again, he was received in a friendly way by the Prince, and set about the restoration of his fortunes. The first thing that he wanted was to get rid of the stigma of his convictions, and in March 1689 he addressed a petition to the House of Lords for a reversal of the judgments against him. He did not find the Lords very sympathetic, and in his anxiety to hasten matters he made a bad blunder. He applied also to the Commons, which led to friction between the two Houses, and to his arrest, at the instance of the Lords, and imprisonment in the Marshalsea for a breach of privilege. The prorogation of Parliament rescued him ; and now the Prince of Orange was moved to compassion and made him a grant of £5 a week. As his sentence remained unreversed, however, there was no prospect of resuming his former career of informer. The brand of perjurer he had to carry for the remainder of his days.

We have practically reached the end of Titus Oates's public career, and his last years will be dealt with briefly, as it is only in his character of arch-liar that we are concerned with him. He did not, indeed, cease lying in 1689 ; but his opportunities of lying on the grand scale were cut off. The passion remained. He even tried to continue plot-mongering, turning his attention to the Jacobites. In 1691 he received as a boarder in his house in Axe Yard, Westminster, William Fuller, an imaginative young man, whom he had hopes of using as a tool against the adherents of the fallen Stuarts. But Fuller disappointed him, and Oates dropped him in disgust.

In May 1693 Oates suffered a sad blow in the reduction of his pension, owing to his violent attacks on the exiled King James having stirred the resentment of his daughter Mary. As some consolation for this, in August of the same year, at the age of

forty-four he at last took to himself a wife, Mrs. Margaret Wells, widow of a "Muggletonian," and the possessor of £2,000 of her own. This marriage caused a good deal of amusement and inspired some gross pasquinades. The lady is said to have been plain. We know nothing else about her, but she may have had some influence over the Reverend Titus, who very soon afterwards was certainly warping away from the Church of England principles which he had at intervals professed. His inclination now was toward his father's old sect, the Anabaptists, whose good opinion he made strenuous efforts to gain.

As with all the religious turnings of Titus Oates, it is very difficult to fathom his motives. In the British Museum there is a manuscript, to which we have already referred, containing some information drawn up in the eighteenth century about Oates and his father. The writer speaks of having seen a copy of a book published in 1688, under the title *A Confession of Faith*, in which Titus Oates signed his name to almost every article, writing in conclusion :

> "I do declare to all the world, especially to those that are baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I do unfainedly from the bottom of my heart, believe every one of these articles contained in this book, intituled A Confession &c., admitting my explaination upon the 6th and 8th particulars &c. and do farther declare that through the strength of Christ I will maintain and defend every one of these articles to the best of my skill and power to the last day of my [life]. And do farther declare that I renounce both the Church of Rome and all other Churches that shall teach for doctrines of God and Christ the traditions of men &c.
>
> "Titus Oates."

Truly a strange document to come from the blasphemous Salamanca Doctor! But it is quite in keeping with letters which he wrote to his friends among the Anabaptists, full of unctuous phrases and the worst kind of cant.

It took the Anabaptists some time to accept him as one of

themselves. Yet it does not seem to have been so much his past record which made them reluctant as his insistence on still wearing his Anglican garb. "Though it may give great offence," he wrote to one of them in October 1696, "yet it will be neither safe for me, nor of any advantage to the Church, to leave it off." Finally he gained his point, and went down to live with some Anabaptists in Wapping, preaching in the local chapel without changing his cloth.

About the same period Oates's financial position improved very notably, through the favour of William of Orange. Mary's death in 1694 had paved the way for this, because Oates's abuse of her father, which had roused her anger, naturally did not have the same effect on James's son-in-law. In 1697 Oates was emboldened to make an appeal to William for some larger recognition of his merits, pleading too that he had a "poor aged mother" to support, which may or may not have been true. The response was satisfactory. Oates was given £500 to pay off his debts and a pension of £300 a year, so that at the age of fifty he had the prospects of a peaceful autumn to his life. He could pay his way, and he had his Wapping chapel at which to preach. Unfortunately he found himself forced to break off his connection with the Anabaptists; or rather they, too, like so many others with whom he had come in contact throughout life, decided to expel him from their midst. He had involved himself in a disreputable affair, endeavouring to get hold of the money of a rich old woman of the congregation, and not only failed in the endeavour, but disgusted his friends.

This expulsion by the Anabaptists took place in 1701. Oates returned from Wapping to Axe Yard, and there spent the last four years of his life. But he had dropped out of view completely now, particularly after Anne's accession to the throne, and his death on July 12th, 1705, scarcely aroused more than passing comment. At fifty-six "the Saviour of the Nation" was forgotten. His place of burial is not even known.

The career of Titus Oates furnishes the severest indictment of England in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Of all the long line of liars in human history, he must surely be the one

for whom the least shadow of excuse is possible. That such a stupendous monster of mendacity should have been able to flourish for years at the public expense and high in the public esteem, trading upon the lowest instincts of bigotry, and dealing out death to innocent people without a grain of compunction, is a humiliating thought to those who would think well of their ancestors.

DUKE DANGERFIELD

# DUKE DANGERFIELD

## I

If it were not for the greater length of Oates's career and the wretched circumstances of Dangerfield's end, it might be difficult to decide which was the bigger scoundrel of the two. Anthony Wood, indeed, calls Dangerfield "the exactest rogue and knave in nature." L'Estrange is content to bracket the two and others when, in an Address to Posterity at the beginning of his *Brief History*, he asks, "What will they [Posterity] think when they shall find Dr. Oates, Capt. Bedloe, Capt. Dangerfield, Stephen Dugdale Esq., with a Hundred Worthies more of the Same Batch, Canoniz'd for Saints, forsooth, and the Saviours of the Nation?" But it is clear from the amount of attention which he devotes to the Salamanca Doctor, as compared with Dangerfield, that he considers the former the arch-villain; and Posterity has taken the same view.

Not but what Dangerfield has considerable claims to the evil pre-eminence. His cold-blooded attempts, however little successful, to do to death so many innocent persons had nothing whatever to excuse them. Sheer lust of making money, in the easiest way at the moment, in order to be able to spend it on a life of debauchery, seems to have been his only motive. He could not even plead what Oates might possibly have pleaded, a genuine hatred of the Church of Rome. There was profit in the profession of Evidence, profit more safely to be gained than in his previous professions of false-coiner, swindler and burglar; and that was enough for him.

At the same time, however, Dangerfield was a more engaging ruffian (if such a qualification as "engaging" can be used) than Oates. In his aspect of frank adventurer, living on his wits and unashamed of his trickeries, the aspect which he reveals in his

not too veracious *Don Tomazo* and in the brief fragment of diary published in 1685, is less revolting than the picture we have of Oates in his own writings, where the hypocrisy of the man is so apparent. Also Dangerfield was "a wittie rogue," as Sir John Bramston calls him, and a handsome fellow; Oates's wit was usually, and his looks were always, grotesque.

Born, it would appear, about 1654, five years later than his rival in mendacity and crime, Thomas Dangerfield was the son of an attorney[1] of the same name at Waltham, Essex. The young Thomas makes his father out to be a "Squire," and describes him as "a person of a severe and disobliging austerity," who frequently and vigorously chastised him. From the account given in *Don Tomazo*, however, not to mention yet what Mrs. Cellier alleges concerning his childhood, we cannot judge that the father was without justification in inflicting frequent punishment. Be that as it may, at the age of thirteen the self-styled Young Squire, "exposed to the rigid lash for every trivial misdemeanour," came to the conclusion that there was no living at home.

He confided his design of running away to one of his father's servants, a Scot named Jemmy, "indigent, cunning and perfidious." Jemmy applauded the idea, and suggested that they should both go to Scotland, where he alleged that he had wealthy and generous relatives. Taking out of the stables two horses, young Thomas rode to London and Jemmy to St. Albans. In London the boy managed to get hold of some money due to his father; and, joining Jemmy at St. Albans, he started north. The journey was delayed by a mishap, but the elder Dangerfield was too proud to make a noise of his losses and did not pursue them, so that eventually they reached their destination, near Moffat.

It is obvious that there is very much more fiction than fact in *Don Tomazo*. But there is an air of reality about the description of this Scottish visit, which prevents us rejecting it. Dangerfield

[1] It is in *The Case of Tho. Dangerfield*, not in *Don Tomazo*, that he gives this information. Roger North also says that the father was an attorney, "and deeply engaged in the late times," by which he presumably means that he was a Parliamentarian. The son, he adds, was "bred as a clerk."

has a graphic pen. Jemmy's wealthy and generous relatives turned out to be his father and mother, with four other children, all living in " a hovel, or rather stie," thirty-six feet in length. At one end was a fire, without a chimney, at the side of a bed ; at the other, without any partition, a cow and two sheep, to which were now added the travellers' horses. Jemmy's mother made for their supper " a Steane-Bannock," composed of bean, pea, barley, and oat meal, mixed with water into a cake and baked.

Then the father, an " old bacon-faced Lown," ordered all to bed—to the only bed, into which, with the father, mother, sons, and daughters, the unhappy guest perforce got. Soon he became acutely aware of other occupants of the bed ; but his restlessness excited the anger of the old man, and he strove to lie still until the first signs of morning. Leaving the others all asleep, he slipped out of the bed, dressed, and led his horse out of the hovel, determined to ride away. But, suddenly stepping on some rotten boards covered with snow, he was precipitated into a deep well. He was not much hurt, and the water was frozen over ; but there was no means of escape.

For some hours the boy remained in his prison. Jemmy had come out to look for him and, not finding him, had ridden over to Moffat to see if he was there. Later the old man tracked his footsteps to the well. He did not, however, rescue him at once, accusing him of being too free with one of his daughters during the night, and holding him responsible for Jemmy's disappearance. At last, after consultation with his wife, he drew the boy up, only to rob him violently of all his remaining money, after which he drove him out, with only his horse, into a country to him entirely strange. Wandering about until nearly nightfall, young Dangerfield reached a village. Here, fortunately for him, the local laird was a kindly old man, who took him in and, after hearing his story, entertained him hospitably. Moreover, being a J.P., next day he sent for the whole of Jemmy's family, made them return the stolen money, and committed them to gaol.

The story of the Scottish adventure is continued at great length and with much vivacity. It tells how Dangerfield, after a forty

days' visit to the laird, was sent off by him to some friends, but was stripped by footpads on the way, being left with no covering save a piece of old "pladd"; how he was taken in and kindly treated by another laird, who set him on his way to Edinburgh with £3 Scots (5*s.*) in his pocket; how he came across his recent robbers at Peebles, was not recognised by them, and even had drinks with them; and how, at a desperate pitch for money, he made his first essay at passing false coin.

He does not explain how a boy of thirteen came to have any experience of the art at which as a man he was to become so notorious. It is possible that at this point in his tale he is merely romancing. Anyhow, he says that he purchased "the ingredients" at Peebles, and, taking some "boatles," worth one-fifth of a penny, whitewashed them, so as to make them look like forty-penny pieces, worth twenty "boatles" each. Thus in a week he put about £5 in his pocket, after which he left Peebles and paid another visit to his first friendly laird, who was able by his description to identify the footpads and have them arrested. The laird and he then set off to Edinburgh for the trial of those who had wronged him. As Dangerfield was under age, however, he could not testify against them, and they were acquitted.

At Edinburgh the boy met certain English gentlemen who knew him, and who agreed to conduct him back to England, after taking him with them on visits to various persons of quality in Scotland. He does not in any way imply that they treated him as a servant. Another mishap befell him at Dumfries, where he offended an old witch, who cast a spell over his horse. To break her power, he attacked her unawares with a knife and cut off her thumb—the drawing of the witch's blood being necessary! On her complaint he was thrown into gaol, but his friends smuggled a rope in to him, and he escaped over the border, to join the others at Carlisle, whence they all proceeded to London.

The extravagance of much of this story brings doubt upon the whole of it; and we have practically no means of checking it. But, as has already been said, we cannot wholly reject it. The local colour is distinctly good. Nor is there any improbability in the "handsome proper young fellow" that Roger North

afterwards described Dangerfield to be, the man of good address, who despite his prison career could ingratiate himself with so many people of repute, having in boyhood had a winning appearance and manner.

Back in London, the young Dangerfield, according to his account, determined to play the Prodigal Son. Through the kind offices of a particular friend of his father, he was received at home. Old Dangerfield hoped that his experiences would make the lad more careful in future ; and, indeed, for about half a year he lived quietly.

Then he broke out again, this time with a love-affair with the thirteen-year-old daughter of a neighbour—he was but fourteen himself. His father, angry at the bad example set to the rest of the family, told him to go, but was persuaded to give him another chance. The " severe and disobliging austerity " which his son attributes to him is not very apparent in this ! His patience was ill rewarded. He discovered that the boy was going out at nights to meet the girl—who seems to have been quite modern in her behaviour—and he " laid on very smartly." He saw, however, that Thomas junior no longer took his punishment in the old boyish way, and so proposed to him an agreement that for his next fault he should be sent away from home. He also locked him in his bedroom at night. But Thomas, who had an assignation with his beloved, lifted a board in the floor and got down, only to find himself in a cellar. Meanwhile his father came to the bedroom and cut off his retreat. After leaving him in the cellar all night, he turned him out of the house next morning.

Even younger, therefore, than Titus Oates when he was expelled from Merchant Taylors', Thomas Dangerfield was driven from home in disgrace. With only 9*d.* in his possession, he set his wits to work. He says that he went to a public-house and, asking for pen and paper, forged a letter from his father to a friend, directing him to pay over £30 to the boy. This he took to the friend, who, however, was a cautious man and would only consent to send the money to Waltham by a servant, in the boy's company. By a stratagem Thomas managed to get hold of the

bag in a dark lane by night, and gave the servant the slip. Then, making for Gravesend, he took a passage to Spain. Henceforward he was a freelance, ready for anything that would bring him money.

Dangerfield's story of his life abroad is full of adventures much to his discredit. When he published his *Don Tomazo* he wrote, in an address to the reader, of his past conduct :

> " Not that he goes about to excuse his offences ; but this he hopes he may presume to say, that it was not his custom to put any man in danger of his life but himself. . . . While he lives to shew that Horace's *Quo semel*——[1] is not always true, let the Vertuous hence observe how laborious a thing it is to be wicked, and let the Vicious learn by his Example to amend."

It may have been true, at the moment that he wrote, that he did not customarily put anyone in danger of his life. It was not true afterwards. As for his exhortation to the " Vertuous " and the " Vicious," that must be regarded, we suppose, as proper to a preface, and not merely a piece of hypocrisy.

In Spain Dangerfield claims to have joined a military company to which foreign recruits were welcomed, and, through the influence of a Spanish captain who took a fancy to him, to have got on well. The company were besieged at Puerto Ferrara by the Portuguese and compelled to surrender, though with the honours of war. Previously some of the leading inhabitants of the town had entrusted their valuable jewels to Dangerfield for safety ; and now he came to his Spanish captain for a passport, with which, and the jewels, he made his way to Leghorn, Scanderoon, and Grand Cairo. In Cairo, while living disguised as a Turk, he met one of the English gentlemen who had brought him back from Scotland, and who had also travelled with him on the boat that took him to Spain. Together they spent their time in debauchery in Cairo. Disreputable adventures in Genoa, and again in Spain, followed, after which they decided to return

[1] *Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem*
*Testa diu.*

—Horace, *Epist.* I. 2. 69.

to England. They were wrecked at sea, however, picked up by a Dutch vessel, and taken to Amsterdam.

All of this, except the mere fact that Dangerfield went to Spain, is probably an effort of the imagination. But we will let him continue. He was now without money, and so was his companion. To remedy this, they took a step which was destined to have an important effect on the one hero's career. With two associates of congenial disposition they set up a coining-den, and began to make and pass spurious silver coins with great success. Becoming ambitious, they turned their attention to gold, and worked other towns besides Amsterdam in a scientific manner. One day, however, they were detected, and Dangerfield and one of the new associates were arrested. By making love to the gaoler's plain daughter—" he seldom lov'd but for his advantage," he says of himself—Dangerfield escaped, taking the lady with him, and made his way ultimately to Brussels. Here coining operations recommenced, Dangerfield's old friend in Scotland, Cairo, and elsewhere, rejoining him, and the gaoler's daughter taking a hand. Once more discovery followed, and Dangerfield and his friend narrowly escaped capture. As the penalty for coining, under Spanish rule, was death in boiling oil, they were lucky. The gaoler's daughter, and the other two men of the gang, paid the penalty.

The two friends resolved not to risk any more dangers on the Continent and returned to England, where they made a venture with a new profession. Fitting out a privateer, they put to sea, having designs on the Guinea Fleet. But off the Irish coast they were wrecked and lost their ship. They began coining again in Dublin, and when that city grew too warm for them crossed over to Bristol and made a fresh start there.

The life of coining continued, mostly in the West of England, varied by another trip to the Continent. At last, in Exeter, Dangerfield was arrested and convicted of swindling a goldsmith. His sentence, he says, was a fine of £45, subsequently reduced to 40*s*., which he paid, escaping without any further charges being made against him. Rejoining his companion in London, he found that they now had between them £1,700 and a quantity

of jewelry. With this they went once more to the Continent; and a long tale follows of spy-service for both the Dutch and the French. This double game nearly ended in Dangerfield's death on more than one occasion. In the French ranks at the battle of Seneffe, where his friend was killed, he was captured by the Spanish, allies of the Dutch, and recognised as the man who had robbed the Governor of Antwerp some time previously. He was condemned to be shot and was actually led out to die, when he was rescued by the intervention of Father Worsley, from the Jesuit College at Antwerp, who had visited him in prison and had received his confession of faith as a Roman Catholic. As Dangerfield explains, if he was to die, it did not matter to him in what faith he died.

Returning to England and trying to pass false coin again in the West of England, he soon came to grief. He was caught at Dorchester, and tried and convicted at Salisbury. After suffering the penalty for his crime, he would have remained in prison through being unable to satisfy the gaoler, but for a lady friend who paid the money and obtained his release. That, at least, is his story. Again in Berkshire he was arrested and kept in prison half a year, but somehow was discharged without any trial.

His next exploit was in London, where he claims to have worked a gigantic swindle on many city merchants in one day. The *modus operandi* was to have a number of good addresses in the City, with a servant at each, and to get a goldsmith or other dealer to call with his wares. After arranging to buy, Dangerfield sent his victim with the servant to another room, ostensibly to collect the money in payment. The servant contrived to lock the merchant in the room, while Dangerfield decamped with the goods to another of his addresses. In this way he says that in nine hours he made £1,625. Such a trick could not be repeated, as it "made too much noise." We should have expected to find an echo of that noise in some publication of the day, but do not—which tempts us to consider the tale a fabrication from beginning to end; one of the author's dreams, perhaps, of how to work a big *coup*.

On his wealth Dangerfield says that he lived for two years in

the country, after which he returned to London and resumed coining. He was unlucky, for his first attempt to pass one of the coins, in Hackney, led to detection and a trial at the Old Bailey, where he was fined £50. As he could not pay, he languished for a whole year in Newgate. Being then pardoned and released, he returned to the old work. Again luck was against him. He sent his servant out to change some spurious guineas, the fraud was discovered, and the servant denounced him. Dangerfield (who at this time was living under the name of Willoughby) induced him to recant and take the business upon himself, but could not leave Newgate, being " forced to lie a good while before he could purchase his liberty, as being charged with actions to a great value "—in other words, being in debt and penniless. At length, with the help of Mrs. Cellier, he was set free.

So much for the account of his early life which he gives in *Don Tomazo*. Now when he had, in 1680, very justly incurred the bitter enmity of Mrs. Cellier, that lady of the venomous pen went to great trouble to hunt up what information could be got about his antecedents, and appended it in a final chapter to her celebrated work, *Malice Defeated*. She begins with what she could ascertain from hearsay at his birthplace. Before he was seven, she alleges, he could not enter any house at Waltham but something would stick to his fingers. On being corrected by his father, he ran away from home, and was only discovered later at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and brought back, being now ten. She alludes to the Scottish adventure, having evidently read *Don Tomazo*, but says that the gentlemen whom he met in Edinburgh took him with them to Spain as a lackey.

In Spain he turned to his old tricks and was dismissed. After a month as a beggar from door to door he became a soldier's servant, and incidentally learnt much about coining. He was, however, detected, and, being too young to be hanged, was branded by the executioner at Puerto Ferrara with the letters " N G," in gunpowder, on the back of the right hand, and lashed out of the town. Mrs. Cellier can hardly have ventured to make this statement about the branding unless it were true, for otherwise it could easily have been disproved; and so Dangerfield's

own story about Puerto Ferrara is sadly shorn of its romance.

From Spain, continues Mrs. Cellier's account, the boy was brought home to England by the charitable master of an English vessel. His father refused to have him at Waltham and apprenticed him to a barber. From the barber he ran away, and " fell so close to the thieving trade " that he was condemned to be hanged before he was seventeen, but had his sentence reduced to transportation, and went to Flanders. Before long he was a prisoner in Antwerp castle for having counterfeited the hand and seal of the Prince of Orange. For twelve weeks he lay awaiting trial, saved from starvation by the charity of some English nuns. He was then tried, condemned to be hanged, and only at the last moment saved by Father Worsley's intercession. This priest further collected about £30 for him, to take him to England and put him in the way of earning an honest living.

At the age of eighteen Dangerfield, so far from striving after an honest living, settled down to a life of constant crimes and convictions. Mrs. Cellier proceeds to give detailed evidence. She does not, it is true, furnish copies of the actual documents ; but we cannot well question her accuracy when others could, if they cared, look up the originals. At the Old Bailey in 1673 he was indicted for stealing a tortoiseshell cabinet and ten pieces of old gold from the house of Thomas Blagrave, a vintner. The jury found a true bill, and Dangerfield was tried and convicted. When asked, before sentence, what he had to say for himself, he " said he was a clerk and prayed the benefit of the Book, which was granted, and he read, and was burn'd in the left hand."

Dangerfield's own explanation of this unfortunate incident, as given in his *Case*, is as follows. He was but a young stripling, he represents, under his father's tuition, when one evening the clerk to another attorney came to him with a cabinet, which he said he had taken from his mother, " a woman very rigid, and careless of his maintenance." He offered the boy a share in the spoils if he would conceal his crime and help him off with them— " which the ignorance of my youth was by such a dazzling prospect easily tempted to undertake." Further, " I was no sooner possessed of my gay toys but I openly wore the rings that came to

my share and showed my silver medals to the country-folk, displaying my prizes with all the folly and pride imaginable of an unexperienced boy." When the description of the stolen property was put in *The Gazette*, the townspeople recognised them, and took the boy to a justice of the peace, to whom he confessed where and how he got his share. In consequence, he was sent for trial and convicted of confederacy. He says nothing here of his burning in the hand ; nor does he mention it in any of his writings.

To resume Mrs. Cellier's catalogue of Dangerfield's crimes : At Chelmsford Assizes on March 1st, 1675, the grand jury found a true bill against him, now described as " Thomas Dangerfield, of Waltham Abbey, labourer," on a charge of stealing £4 10s. from a shoemaker at Windsmore Hill the previous year. He may have been lying in Chelmsford prison for some time previous to the assizes ; but now he managed to break prison and escape. In consequence, he was outlawed.

The next conviction was at the Wilts Assizes on August 4th, 1677, when he was indicted on three cases of uttering false guineas. In each case he was fined £5 and sentenced to stand in the pillory—twice at Salisbury and once at Wilton. He broke prison again, however, before his turn to stand at Wilton.

In 1678 (it must have been in the early part of the year) Dangerfield appeared at Hicks Hall, being indicted for uttering twenty false guineas in the parish of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, and the result was that he was fined £50, to lie in prison till he should pay. Here, though Dangerfield only admits to trying to pass one guinea at Hackney, his tale and Mrs. Cellier's correspond closely.

Altogether Mrs. Cellier says that she found her enemy's name recorded in twenty-eight places, including one transportation, one burning in the hand, five sentences to the pillory, seven fines, two outlawries for felony, and eight escapes from gaol. She mentions also his lashing through the streets of Reading, barefooted and bareheaded. But the worst thing of all with which she charges him is that in November or December, 1678, while he was in Newgate through his inability to pay the fine of £50, he broke a hole in the wall with the help of fellow-prisoners, and

before they could escape gave information to Richardson, the gaoler, whereby his associates were punished and he received "a general Newgate pardon." He continued in Newgate, however, for want of money to pay his debts; and there, to her cost, Mrs. Cellier found him and took pity on him, not as yet knowing his character.

Now at last we come into touch with Dangerfield as a solid historical figure, when in the spring of 1679, at the age of twenty-five, he was commended by a late inmate of Newgate to the attention of that very remarkable woman whose story for a time was so interwoven with his.

Elizabeth Cellier was by birth a Dormer, apparently of the Peterley branch of the family. She was, she says in the apology with which she prefaces her *Malice Defeated*, born and bred up under Protestant parents; but, seeing the oppression and ruin of the whole of the loyal party[1] at the hands of those who assumed to themselves alone the name of Protestants, and called the loyalists all Papists and idolators, she began to enquire into the religion to which the authors of these villainies pretended the greatest antipathy. She found her innate loyalty confirmed by her studies, and, "the doctrines [of Rome] agreeing with her public morals and no way contradicting her private ones," she had since followed them.

At the beginning of 1679 Mrs. Cellier was living in Arundel Street, Strand, her husband being a French merchant, by name Peter Cellier, and apparently considerably her senior, though we do not, as a matter of fact, know more about her age than that she had a married daughter. She followed the profession of midwife, in which she obtained some celebrity, partly, no doubt, because she was "the Popish midwife," but also because she took a keen interest in her work. Seven years later she was to publish her pamphlet *A Scheme for the Foundation of a Royal Hospital . . . for the Maintenance of a Corporation of Skilled Midwives*, which included a branch for the bringing up of foundling children. Her enemies made much of the point that she

[1] Her father and brother, she claims elsewhere, were both killed in one day in His Majesty's service; and the family estates were seized (*State Trials*, VII., p. 1203).

ELIZABETH CELLIER ON THE PILLORY

*From a contemporary broadside*

[p. 146

proposed to be at the head of this hospital herself ; but she was undoubtedly a charitable woman, if at the same time a born intriguer and an ardent controversialist. She was well enough off to have lent the first Duchess of York five or six hundred pounds.

It was the cause of charity which took Mrs. Cellier to Newgate. The prison was filled with Roman Catholics, most of them in extreme destitution, to whose needs she went regularly to minister. About the end of January 1679 one of them, a Captain Pugh, begged her to take a letter from him to the Marchioness of Powis, one of the leading Roman Catholic ladies in the country, and with it a letter, of which he had somehow become possessed, in Titus Oates's handwriting. This latter document accused Bedloe of various robberies at Bilbao and Bruges, including the defrauding of the great Titus himself at Bilbao, when Bedloe was masquerading as Lord Gerard.

Mrs. Cellier, though through her profession she had a considerable acquaintance among the Roman Catholic nobility, had not previously known Lady Powis ; but they quickly became friends, having common bonds in their passion for charity and intrigue combined. Lady Powis arranged to have a weekly sum collected, with the distribution of which among the poor prisoners she entrusted the other. While Mrs. Cellier was thus engaged, there came to her house one day a Mrs. Mary White, a married woman whom she had befriended and assisted through childbirth in Newgate, and who had now just been released. Mrs. White told her that there was in the prison a young man named Willoughby, who might be of service to their cause. He was a Roman Catholic and innocent of crime, had been hardly used on account of his religion and put in heavy irons because he would not go to the chapel in Newgate. He had drawn up articles against the keepers. This last point was true. Dangerfield had spent some of his enforced leisure in devising a complaint against Captain Richardson for the way in which he treated his captives. (After the general pardon which he had obtained through Richardson, this was scarcely grateful on Dangerfield's part ; but it is not surprising !) Mrs. Cellier was much interested. She wanted evidence of this kind, for her own reasons.

On January 9th, 1679, according to her account, she was in the Lodge at Newgate with five other women, when they heard " terrible grones and squeeks " coming from the dungeon known as " the condemned hole." The turnkey, when questioned, said it was a woman in labour, but refused to allow Mrs. Cellier to go to her aid, and finally drove the women roughly out of the gaol. Outside the gate they stopped to listen, and made the voice out to be that of a strong man in torture. Between the groans they heard, as they thought, the winding up of some engine. Mrs. Cellier set a woman to watch Newgate and ascertained that the same sounds were heard on January 10th and 11th, and that on the latter day the turnkeys carried a bed into " the condemned hole." This, they said, was for Prance, who had gone mad and torn his bed to pieces !

This story, when published later in *Malice Defeated*, aroused Mrs. Cellier's enemies, the believers in the Popish Plot, to fury,[1] and formed one of the points on which the Crown prosecution of Mrs. Cellier was based in September 1680. At present, however, it was unpublished, though known no doubt to her intimates. She gladly seized on a chance of getting confirmation of her conviction that torture went on of the Roman Catholic prisoners in Newgate, and decided to visit Dangerfield. Accordingly, about April 10th, she says, she went to the Grate and spoke to him. She found him in irons and rags. Calling himself Willoughby, he represented that he was the nephew of a person of quality, of that name, whom she knew ; that, on coming from Flanders, he had been arrested on suspicion through lodging in the same house with some coiners ; and that, though he was acquitted, his uncle was so displeased that he would have nothing to do with him. He was merely in prison for his debts, and, " in very humble and religious words," begged her charity.

Mrs. Cellier took the account which he had drawn up of Richardson's exactions from the prisoners, the tortures, starvations, solitary confinements, etc., in Newgate, to which he appended the names of other captives who would be willing to support

[1] It has also annoyed some of the historians of the Plot, who scout the idea that Prance was tortured. But see p. 78.

him, he said. She sent it up to the House of Commons—where no more was heard of it. Before leaving Newgate she gave "Willoughby" 2*s.* 6*d.*, for which he expressed his thanks, saying he had eaten nothing for two days.

Thereafter she claims that, upon his frequent solicitations, she sent him, at various times while he was in Newgate, 15*s.* in all, and no more. Finally, however, she sent him enough to pay the fees which were demanded from him, and an extra 16*s.* to redeem a coat which he had pawned. She had more work for him to do; but her story of what she planned is not quite clear. What actually happened after Dangerfield's release from Newgate was that he was immediately rearrested for debt and sent to the Counter. With her assistance, he got himself removed to the King's Bench prison by means of *habeas corpus;* and there he had a message from her through her servant, Margaret Jenkins, that he was to get acquainted with a certain William Strode, who had been condemned for murder, but reprieved, and still lay in gaol.

Strode had been reported to Mrs. Cellier as knowing much about the Popish Plot and, in particular, with having papers which might be useful against Bedloe, especially as proving an admission on his part that he had never seen Sir Edmund Godfrey. (It is astonishing how, at this period, prisoners could have about them papers most compromising to themselves or other people.) As a matter of fact, Strode was well acquainted with Bedloe, having formerly been a fellow-footpad, or at least having given him shelter when there was a hue and cry after him for "padding" in Somerset. But, apart from what he might know of Bedloe. Strode was interesting to Mrs. Cellier for another reason. It was suspected that he was in constant communication with the Earl of Shaftesbury, which boded no good to the Roman Catholics. Might there not be a new King's evidence in the making? This was what Dangerfield was required to find out.

The young man readily undertook the work. He decided to make what we may, doubtfully, call a clean breast of it. He confessed to Mrs. Cellier's messenger that he had once been a criminal, though now full of sorrow for his misdeeds, and that he and Strode had long known one another, having often "been

a-robbing together." He had no doubt he could effect what Mrs. Cellier desired.

Strode had a weakness for drink, and it was decided to take advantage of this. Dangerfield, having, so he says, assured two priests to whom he was introduced in prison that his own head would stand drink, was directed to entertain Strode as much as possible. Furthermore, he was told to send out to Blasedale, an apothecary in Arundel Street, who had married a daughter of Mrs. Cellier, for some tincture of opium to put in Strode's drink. This was not a success, for the first use of the opium only made the man drowsy, while the second time, when it was poured into a tankard of small bitter beer, Strode tasted his liquor and threw it away, swearing he believed they would poison him before he was set free.

However, the attempt to get information did not entirely fail. It was on May 10th that Dangerfield went to the King's Bench prison ; and on the 20th he had a report ready for his employer, gathered from daily conversations with Strode or his bedfellow in prison, Jones. The information was not very valuable, but, for once in a way, Dangerfield seems to have written it down truthfully. Strode admitted that he received frequent visits from one of Lord Shaftesbury's servants, who brought him money to prevail upon him to join evidence with Bedloe. This, however, the worthy Strode refused to do, as it would mean perjuring himself ! It came out later that Strode was really kept in the King's Bench as a spy, paid by both Shaftesbury and Bedloe, and that Shaftesbury was bargaining with him to secure his release as soon as he knew how much he was prepared to swear. What his lordship wanted was testimony that the Duke and Duchess of York were in the Plot.

We cannot say yet that Dangerfield had the idea of going over to Shaftesbury's party. He had a terrible criminal record, he had so far no secrets of other people to reveal, and he could command no price ; whereas he was being paid for his work on Mrs. Cellier's behalf. But his life in gaol irked him, and he made frequent applications to her to procure his freedom, when he promised to take any pains for an honest living. Pleased with

what he had been able to do for her so far, she yielded. She collected some money for him and paid out £5 for the debts which kept him in the King's Bench—and not a penny more,[1] she adds, appealing to the document for his general release from his creditors, which was taken among his other papers before the Privy Council. Then she gave him, on the day he came out of gaol, not £5, as he afterwards alleged, but 10*s.* only, "that he might not steal for want of bread."

It was now June 1679; and, when the trial of the Five Jesuits came on, employment was found for Dangerfield in attending to the needs of the witnesses for the defence, including the youths from St. Omer, which kept him very busy. Mrs. Cellier says that she was frequently asked whose diligent footman "Willoughby" was. She describes him as dressed in an old frieze coat, lined with blue, blue breeches and stockings, and a grey hat, turned up to prevent it flapping about his ears. He could not be taken for other than an ill-dressed footman, "though now," she writes bitterly in 1680, "he be dubb'd Knight of the Post and wear a pearl in his ear, to show that the executioners were kind to him and did not nail his ears to the pillory, neither at Salisbury, Wilton, Winborne, nor any of the other places where he was mounted upon the wooden engine."

After the Five Jesuits' trial had come to an end, Mrs. Cellier bethought her of other work for her *protégé*. This was to collect some outstanding debts due to her husband, which he despaired of making the debtors pay. Dangerfield said he understood such business and had no doubt he could get in the money, if he had a suit of clothes and a hat. Mrs. Cellier accordingly gave him £3 10*s.* for clothing—as always, she is careful to name the exact sum—and promised him 6*s.* in the £ on what debts he could collect.

At the time, Mrs. Cellier was stopping at Powis House, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, whither she had gone to escape the unwelcome

[1] Dangerfield, in his *Particular Narrative*, had claimed that Mrs. Cellier sent him 20*s.* in response to his first bequest from the King's Bench, called to see him next day and gave him another 20*s.*, and promised him as much every week—and more if that was not enough. His debts were £700, and when he came to a composition she paid that for him, giving him another £5 for the prison fees, though he admits that the £5 came from Lady Powis. His object, of course, was to make out that Mrs. Cellier was very lavish with her money-gifts to him.

attentions of Sir William Waller, that great harrier of the Papists; and Dangerfield says that when he called there to see her she introduced him to Lady Powis, who thanked him for his diligence in the matter of Strode. Lady Powis later denied that she mentioned Strode. But both ladies may well have been completely deceived as to his character so far, and no doubt were pleased at the idea of helping the interesting young reformed criminal along the road of honesty. He met with some success in his debt-collecting, and at the same time began to bring to Mrs. Cellier news of factious designs against the Government, in which work, she says, she encouraged him. His account is that she set him on this business, directing him to go to coffee-houses, leave pamphlets about, and spread the story that Sir Edmund Godfrey's death had been due to Lord Shaftesbury's orders. He also claims that Lady Powis sent him down to Peterley with a packet to a priest called Jane, who was in hiding there, at the house of a Mr. Webb; and that when he brought back an answer, advising the charging of treason against the Presbyterians, she read it aloud in his presence. There is more than a touch of Oates in this story. It was proved afterwards, before the Privy Council, that Dangerfield's only errand to Peterley was at Mrs. Cellier's bidding, to bring a child up to London.

On his first emergence from the King's Bench, Dangerfield went to lodge at the Goat, in Drury Lane, 10*s*. weekly being allowed to him by the captive Lords in the Tower. But when he was sent on an errand to Lord Powis there, his lordship, thinking him likely to be useful, arranged to give him £3 a week for business expenses and directed him to take up his abode at Powis House. Here he successfully strove for the release of Lane, Oates's former servant, from the Gatehouse; and when Knox, too, had been released, the two came to Powis House and worked up with Dangerfield their scheme to discredit Oates. This part of Dangerfield's *Narrative* seems to have some truth in it. But Lady Powis later testified to the Privy Council that it was not with her consent, or even knowledge, that he ever lodged in Powis House; and her butler stated that, though Dangerfield was there, it was without Lord Powis's knowledge either.

About the end of July Mrs. Cellier moved back to her house in Arundel Street, there being a fear that Sir William Waller was contemplating a raid on Powis House. She was indiscreet enough to take Dangerfield with her and assign him a room, a step which she soon had bitter cause to regret. But the obliging "Willoughby" was playing his cards well. When the King fell gravely ill at Windsor in August, rumours reached Mrs. Cellier, from other sources, that the Presbyterians had their programme ready, in the event of Charles's death, to seize control of affairs. Sir William Waller and Colonel Mansell, she heard, were offering commissions to disbanded officers; and Waller had publicly declared in Southwark that there would be a rebellion before Michaelmas. When "Willoughby" came to her and told her how he had been offered a commission himself, had seen several commissions, etc., she easily believed him. She begged him to write down all he heard, so that it might be shown to the King.

Dangerfield's version of the story is that Mrs. Cellier, in collaboration with him and others, deliberately concocted the papers about a Presbyterian Plot, she being the instigator. He has much else to say of this period, which, though he did not publish it until later, may be recorded here. There was a real new plot on foot among the Papists, he said, to assassinate the King. When he had gone on a message to the Lords in the Tower, they had urged him to attempt it, offering him £2,000 for the job. He had refused and had been, in consequence, rebuked by Lord Castlemaine.[1] On going to confession at Wild House, by Mrs. Cellier's advice, the priest also rebuked him. Lastly, Gadbury the astrologer added a passionate rebuke. Dangerfield went back to Mrs. Cellier and told her of this. "Mr. Gadbury is a very good Catholique," replied Mrs. Cellier.

Another plot was to assassinate Lord Shaftesbury, to which both Lady Powis and Mrs. Cellier urged him, giving him a dagger and telling him that his religion obliged him to part with his life for the good of the cause. Lord Powis, too, pressed him, and on his agreeing gave him ten guineas. Twice he went to Shaftesbury, but could not strike. When he declined to make a third attempt,

[1] See p. 178.

Lady Powis rapped him gently on the back of the hand with her fan and called him "a cow-hearted fellow!" She said she would go to Shaftesbury herself. "No, madam," cried Mrs. Cellier, "that shall not be, for I will signify to the world the bravery of our sex above the men, and go myself to the work!"

This preposterous nonsense, which Dangerfield gives in both his *Particular Narrative* and his *Case*, was disproved by the sworn statements of Lady Powis and Mrs. Cellier before the Privy Council. But he had plenty of other tales equally absurd. One of the strangest, however, contains some elements of truth. Lady Powis and Mrs. Cellier discussed before him the plan for bringing over Sir Robert Peyton, hitherto a violent enemy of the Court, to the King's side. A meeting had been arranged between Peyton and Lord Peterborough, Lady Powis's son-in-law. Gadbury's house in Westminster was decided on as the *rendezvous*, and Dangerfield was sent to tell Gadbury.

It was on this occasion, Dangerfield pretends, that the astrologer was so angry with him, and told him that he had only been taken out of prison that he might attempt the assassination of Charles. He further told him—and here the truthful part of the story seems to come in—that, while he (Dangerfield) was in the King's Bench, Mrs. Cellier had called on him and asked him to calculate a nativity for her, giving him what afterwards turned out to be the year and day and hour of Dangerfield's birth. Gadbury discovered the person enquired about to be suitable for the work for which he was to be employed—"a bold and adventurous man," says Gadbury himself in his examination before the Privy Council. He did not remember whether he had foretold that the man would be hanged; but it was possible that he had said so!

Mrs. Cellier could not deny that she had consulted Gadbury about a nativity for Dangerfield; but she maintained that she had no bad intentions in so doing, and we may believe her. It is certain, however, that she was curious about something more than her *protégé's* abilities as debt-collector for her husband. She undoubtedly meant to use him in her scheme to vindicate the Roman Catholics from the monstrous charges against them.

What is doubtful is whether she was, as she represents, a dupe of his mendacious tales, or, as he claims, his prompter and inspirer. She obviously was not scrupulous as to means, so long as the end was good, and she was in league with a number of priests, embittered by imprisonment and also not over-scrupulous as to the means to right their wrongs. One method was the production of pamphlets to combat the story of the Popish Plot and to make counter-charges of treason against the Presbyterians in particular. Besides the priests there was a man named Henry Nevill, *alias* Payne, a captive in the King's Bench prison on a charge of high treason, who occupied his time in working up a case against the various King's evidences and planning fresh pamphlets. With the help of Peter and Mrs. Cellier, who bailed him out and lent him £80, Nevill was rescued from gaol and urged to continue his work.

Dangerfield says that he was set to transcribing papers for Nevill and then took to scribbling pamphlets himself. To procure material he was sent to the various coffee-houses and clubs about the City, and while there he was to distribute, as well as to collect, information; Lady Powis bidding him "stick hard" against Monmouth, Buckingham, Shaftesbury, Grey, and others of like sympathies. At the coffee-houses, too, pamphlets and propagandist poems might be conveniently left about.

These coffee-houses were the favourite resorts of factious people, and if intelligence was to be gained of any real plot against the Government it was at them that it was most likely to be found. Dangerfield's principal task, therefore, was to haunt them, with his ears open. He was nothing loth. Other drink than coffee was to be procured; and his taste for alcohol was well developed. This had its inconveniences in a spy, and he got into trouble once, though his patroness did not hear of it till later.[1] He usually went at night to Farr's coffee-house, the Rainbow, near the Temple. One night he was drinking there, and let drop some remark about Lord Danby having been privy to Sir Edmund Godfrey's death, which caused a quarrel with a

[1] When she did, Dangerfield was banished to a garret. According to Peter Cellier's evidence at Dangerfield's last trial, he made similar remarks one day at Arundel Street to those he made at the Rainbow. See p. 193.

"Mr. Kenestone." This is Dangerfield's own version. Mrs. Cellier's is that he got drunk and quarrelled with "one Keyniston" after which he swore, she afterwards learnt, that "God damn him, now the Papists would give him no money, he would go over to the Presbyterians, and they would give him enough."

The story is somewhat obscure, but Mrs. Cellier's version seems to be nearer the truth. What Dangerfield wanted was to get hold of a commission in the army which he had told her the Presbyterians were collecting for a rebellion. Failing to do this, he apparently thought he would find his supplies of money from Roman Catholics drying up, so that a change of sides would be advisable.

He did not, however, allow any suspicion of a change to reach Arundel Street or Powis House yet. On the contrary, he led his paymistresses to believe that he would soon bring off a fine *coup*. He was constantly reporting great preparations for a rising in the City, at a word from Shaftesbury and the "Confederate Lords," and promising to furnish proofs. Lord Peterborough came to hear something of this, doubtless through his mother-in-law, Lady Powis, and expressed a wish to meet Dangerfield, or rather "Willoughby," since no one knew him by the name of Dangerfield at this time. Mrs. Cellier arranged to bring them together, and gave Peterborough (as he told the Privy Council on November 4th) a great character of "Willoughby," who "had improved himself," she said, "in the service of the Prince of Orange and under the Duke de Villa Hermosa."

To show to Peterborough, there was taken the paper which was afterwards found in the famous meal-tub, containing lists of the chiefs in the Presbyterian plot, of the members of the seditious clubs, etc. This Dangerfield had written at intervals from his observations in the City, according to Mrs. Cellier. He maintains that most of it was dictated to him by Lady Powis, though he admits that some particulars were added from what his agents in the coffee-houses had told him. In the company of Mrs. Cellier he went to Lord Peterborough, who read the paper and thought it of sufficient importance to be shown to the Duke of York. Accordingly the same night, after the Duke had

supped, Peterborough took the visitors to him. "Willoughby" answered the questions put to him in the way he says that he had been instructed to answer, and when the interview was over Peterborough told him that His Royal Highness was well pleased with him. From this time, he adds, Lord Peterborough called him "Captain Willoughby"—which rank, of course, was due to his service with the Prince of Orange and the Duke de Villa Hermosa!

Soon after, James sent for him again, told him that he must give the King an account more at large of the contents of the paper, and presented him with twenty guineas, "to encourage him." The Duke, he thought, really believed in the truth of the plot. When the King, now fully recovered from his illness, came from Windsor, "Captain Willoughby" was granted an audience, after fresh instructions from Lady Powis, he says, to lay all the burden he could upon the Presbyterians and to represent them as having planned to make the Duke of Monmouth head of the State.

Dangerfield says that Charles seemed to believe in the plot, though he afterwards declared that he gave no credit to it, for it was so impossible a thing. Anyhow he ordered £40 to be given to the informer, and told him to bring any fresh discoveries to Colonel Halsall. The paper he passed on to Mr. Secretary Coventry, with whom Dangerfield next had an interview. Roger North states that at this interview Dangerfield pretended want of money and obtained some, but desired more, whereupon the Secretary began to "grow waspish," and told him that "all his discovery lay in his own talk."

Nevertheless, Dangerfield had further audiences. He wrote a letter to Charles when he was at Newmarket, professing to have discovered a great correspondence between the Presbyterians and the Dutch, and was received again on the King's return. He does not appear to have had any new papers to show, but merely related his business and withdrew. Clearly he began to feel that he must discover something beyond "his own talk," if he was to maintain his credit. He therefore took a bold step. It was about the beginning of October that he came to Mrs.

Cellier to announce that he had learnt, through an agent he employed to haunt Sir William Waller's club in Westminster Market, that there were treasonable papers, revealing the whole design, to be found at a house in Westminster, if only a search-warrant could be procured.

So says Mrs. Cellier. Dangerfield alleges that she herself wrote up the papers with him, and arranged that they should be planted in the houses of prominent Presbyterians, with a view to their discovery later. We cannot say that this was impossible ; but it is hard to credit anything that Dangerfield tells in his *Narratives* and other accounts of the events of 1679. We know that Mrs. Cellier was anxious to get hold of something tangible to put before the King to prove a Presbyterian plot. But it would have been monstrously foolish of her to approach Charles with what she knew to be a pure forgery. Her reputation as a clever woman suffers less from the possibility of her being duped by Dangerfield than from the suggestion that she hoped to palm off a sham-plot of her own concoction on the King. What is most likely is that she believed there was a plot (in which belief she was not altogether wrong) and was willing to have implicated in it as many as possible of her religion's persecutors. A little fraud, to help the cause, was not repugnant to her intriguing soul. There was a gigantic fraud, the Popish Plot, to be fought, and there was little chance of fighting it with the weapons of truth alone. How could she, being Elizabeth Cellier, hesitate ?

The duping of Mrs. Cellier, so far as she was taken in by his inventions, has been explained, both in her own times and in many works to the present day, as due to her being in love with Dangerfield. Her many virulent foes sedulously spread, and some of them no doubt believed in, the story that she was infatuated with the handsome young blackguard, and, regardless of her duties as a wife, took him as her lover. Dangerfield himself, after the break in their acquaintance, encouraged the report, and got a discharged maid of hers to give evidence against her—in those days, as now, an easy matter. Public opinion eagerly swallowed any scandal about " the Popish midwife," or

"Mother Cellier," to give her one of her popular nicknames.[1] That charitable prelate, Bishop Burnet, accepted the story and wrote of Dangerfield's "ill intrigue with one Cellier, a Popish midwife, who had a great share of wit and was abandoned to lewdness."

Not content with giving the lady one lover, her detractors also assigned her another in John Gadbury, a man nearer her own age than Dangerfield; for the astrologer was over fifty. A rough woodcut of the time, preserved in the Bagford Collection in the British Museum, represents Mrs. Cellier as sitting on Gadbury's knees, with her arm round his neck. There is nothing whatever to show that there was any justification for this coupling of her name with Gadbury's. Nor is there any real evidence that she was intimate with Dangerfield. She was certainly very indiscreet in the way in which she took him up and gave him a room in her house. Her husband was there, it is true; though, being a Frenchman and a Roman Catholic, he was considered fair game for rude jests in consequence. An elderly man, a middle-aged woman, and a twenty-five-year-old gallant—the situation was irresistible to the scandalmongers. Nevertheless, all proof of an intrigue is wanting. Even Lord Chief Justice Scroggs, at Mrs. Cellier's trial for treason, felt impelled to make a mild remonstrance against the insinuations of the Crown witnesses.

Mrs. Cellier indeed paid dearly for the use of such an agent as Dangerfield. But up to nearly the end of October 1679, she did not realise this. She welcomed his story of the house in Westminster, with the store of treasonable papers, and endeavoured to assist him to get a search-warrant. The house was one in which lodged a Colonel Roderick Mansell, formerly in the employ of the Earl of Essex, and now an associate of the malcontents who thronged the City coffee-houses and talked treason. Mansell afterwards protested his entire loyalty; but he certainly kept

[1] In the book *120 Loyal Songs*, published in 1684, are some lines about the various authors of libels, two of which run:

"Then *Don Dangerfeldo*, more subtile by far
Than poor *Mother Cellier* that acted no harm."

By the time this was written there had been a growth of opinion more favourable to "Mother Cellier."

doubtful company, and Mrs. Cellier had heard rumours about him from other sources than Dangerfield.

To get a warrant did not prove an easy matter. Dangerfield saw Charles again and, to show that he was as intimate with Lord Shaftesbury as he pretended to be, produced two letters which he had managed to extract from a drawer during one of his calls at Shaftesbury's house in Aldersgate Street. They were written to his lordship by Sir Richard Bulstrode in Brussels, but when examined did not prove to be of any importance. But Dangerfield told Charles that really important documents could be seized, provided that he could have a warrant to search Mansell's lodging. The King directed him to go to Secretary Coventry for the warrant. Coventry, however, would not grant a warrant unless Dangerfield made affidavit that he had seen the papers at Mansell's. This risk, seeing that there were no papers there yet, Dangerfield was not prepared to take ; and he returned to Mrs. Cellier without his warrant.

Mrs. Cellier does not deny that she advised him as to the next step. She only claims that she believed what he told her to be true. She told him to " go by the Custom-house way," that is to inform the Customs officials that Mansell had contraband lace from Flanders in his possession. Dangerfield took her advice, but contends, of course, that she was fully aware of what was going to happen. He went to Axe Yard, Westminster, where Mansell lodged, and asked for a room. He professed not to like a vacant room there and wanted the one Mansell had. When Mansell heard of this, he consented to exchange rooms for the good of the house. Then, on the pretence of seeing the rooms again, he managed to be left in Mansell's new apartment during his absence and to secrete his prepared packet of papers in a space behind the bed-head.

All being now ready, on the morning of October 22nd Dangerfield reappeared accompanied by Customs officers with their warrant. No contraband was found in Mansell's room, and the search was finishing when, on the bed being moved, Dangerfield suddenly cried out, " What's that there ? " He seized the packet from where he had put it and began to read, exclaiming " Here's

treason!" "There's treason against His Majesty," he continued, and handed the packet to the officers. Then, while they carried it and other papers of Mansell's to the Custom-house, he went off to Whitehall to report to the King, who received him alone and heard what he had to say. On going back to tell Mrs. Cellier what had happened, he alleges that, when she heard he had been alone with Charles, she said, "Oh, what an opportunity have you let slip!" and that Lady Powis, who was with her, agreed, "How bravely might he have killed the King if he had been provided!"

This charming little piece of falsehood at the end need not make us doubt the truth of the rest of the story, which is not challenged. The sequel was very swift trouble for Dangerfield. News soon reached Mansell of the search of his room, and he went back to find that the Customs officers had restored his papers and the forged packet as well, which he took at once to Justice Warcup. The latter made out a warrant for Dangerfield's arrest, and proceeded with a constable to Mrs. Cellier's house. He accepted, however, the sureties of Peter Cellier and of Henry Blasedale, the apothecary, for Dangerfield's appearance before the Privy Council next morning.

Dangerfield duly appeared outside the Council-room; but there his past suddenly cropped up in a most awkward manner. He had what he calls "a very unhappy rencounter" with a Mr. D'Oiley, or Doyley, of the Mint, who had twice prosecuted him for coining. This Doyley had seen him or heard of him not long before, when he went on a message to Lord Powis in the Tower, and had threatened to have him arrested. On the present occasion Dangerfield seems to have lost his head. He admits that he "began to curse without any provocation," and threatened that, if he had Doyley out of the Court, he would "cut his croune." Doyley not unnaturally resented this and denounced him as a coiner. The result was that, though he maintained that he was employed on the King's business, he was put under arrest until he should come up for examination by the Council in the afternoon. According to Roger North, Secretary Coventry, coming into the Council-room, smilingly observed that his

intelligencer was apprehended for a coiner! "Your intelligencer must answer the Law," said the others.

The Council only began the examination of the Mansell case on the 23rd, and Dangerfield was allowed out on bail that night.[1] The next day, when the matter was adjourned to the 27th, Justice Warcup refused bail. Mrs. Cellier says that before dinner on the 24th Dangerfield came and begged to speak to her, as he was going to the Council after dinner and believed that he would be committed. "What have you done to make such a bustle in the Town about you?" she asked. It was best for her to be ignorant, he replied; he had done something he should not, but he hoped God would bring him off. To help in his defence, would she lay up a paper for him safely? Was it nothing that would bring her into danger? she asked. If it were, he said, he would not be such a villain as to give it to her.

The paper in question was that which Dangerfield had shown in succession to Lord Peterborough, the Duke of York, the King, and Henry Coventry, of whom the last-named had returned it to him. She took it from him and gave it to her servant Anne Blake, who put it in a tub in the kitchen, under some meal.

On October 27th Dangerfield made his defence before the Privy Council. The witnesses against him were very damaging as to his past career. Captain Richardson declared him the most notorious rogue he had ever had in custody; and the various admissions which he was forced to make about his recent activities were injurious also. "You are a fine fellow," remarked the Lord Chancellor to him, "to come first to His Majesty and tell him one story; then to the Lord Powis and from thence to my Lord Shaftesbury's, and to discover to one what discourse you had with the other; and bring one story to the Earl of Shaftesbury and another to the Council."

Dangerfield prints, in his *Particular Narrative*, a list of instructions which he says Lady Powis sent him for his defence. If they really came from her, they availed him nothing. The

[1] Mansell alleged later that many of the Council would have favoured Dangerfield's escape, and that only the vigilance of Warcup, who by his own warrant confined him, prevented this (*Calendar of State Papers*, Statement of Col. Mansell, October 17th, 1681). But Dangerfield is positive on the point.

result of his examination was a warrant to commit him to Newgate and an order to the Attorney-General to prosecute him for "forging letters importing High Treason and fixing the same privately in Mr. Mansell's chamber to render him guilty thereof without cause."

In his sad plight Dangerfield could at first think of nothing better than to appeal to Mrs. Cellier, who says that he sent a message to her servant Susan Edwards. Susan went to Newgate, and to her he "howled and lamented." He gave her a long epistle to her mistress, in which he said he had been tortured that night, but would be torn to pieces rather than betray her or any other innocent person.

Mrs. Cellier had begun to rue her acquaintance with the dashing "Captain Willoughby." On the 27th she had slept away from home, perhaps at Powis House. Hearing that Sir William Waller was proposing to call upon her, she hastened home next morning and received him. After a search of her papers, he demanded that she should come with him to Lord Shaftesbury. She refused, and pleaded that she was the wife of a French merchant. Waller gave way, and, on Peter Cellier and another pledging their word that she would be forthcoming when required, he took his departure. It seems to have been on this day that she received Dangerfield's appeal. She sent word to him that "her life was in his hands"; and the next day she sent Susan Edwards again with a note: "I have said you were taken into my house to get in desperate debts. They bring me to L. S. They will ask me who encouraged me to go to him.[1] I will say it was you, it cannot worst you."

She says that she sent this message because it was truth. But the fact that she also thought it necessary for Susan to take

[1] With regard to her previous acquaintance with Shaftesbury, Mrs. Cellier told the Privy Council a remarkable story on November 4th (*Malice Defeated*, p. 25). When Sir William Waller had been troubling her in April she had written to Shaftesbury, whereon he saw Waller; and the latter had troubled her no more until ten or twelve days before Dangerfield's arrest. Then, hearing from Dangerfield that she was on Waller's "Black Bill" and was to have her house searched, she decided to visit Shaftesbury, thank him for what he had done for her before, and ask for further protection. "Madam," she claims that Shaftesbury said to her, "I am for the propagation of the Protestant faith; yet because I think you an excellent woman, though of another religion, I promise you I will do all the good I can." It is difficult to imagine why Shaftesbury should have put himself out to assist Mrs. Cellier—except in the hope that she might be induced to turn "honest."

(with a guinea, and twenty shillings in silver) two of Cellier's account-books shows that she was not confident that Dangerfield could make out a very good case for his work as debt-collector. On receipt of her message he replied, asking if victuals might be sent from her house to Newgate twice daily—and might he have a promise of it in writing? This last request made her suspicious. But she sent him food and with it a paper on which she had written her family motto, "I never change." This, she hoped, would not be enough to do her any mischief.

This same night, the 29th, as she was at supper, Sir William Waller returned, with a warrant committing her to the Gatehouse, whither she was despatched at 10 o'clock. Waller then had her house thoroughly searched, and found the paper hidden in the meal-tub, and also, behind the pewter in the kitchen, the information, in Dangerfield's writing, which he had collected from Strode the previous May. In addition, Waller, according to his wont, carried off what private papers he could find of value.

On October 31st Mrs. Cellier got herself taken to the King's Bench Bar, hoping to be bailed. She learnt, however, that bail was opposed by Waller, who sent in a charge of high treason; and next day she was brought up before the Privy Council, where she found among her accusers "Captain Willoughby," King's evidence!

Dangerfield had not taken long to make up his mind to turn evidence after his hopes of help from Mrs. Cellier failed. We find no confirmation of her story that he was tortured. It was illegal to torture a witness to extract testimony; but that does not, of course, prove that torture was not used on either Dangerfield or Prance. Dangerfield's own statement, at the beginning of his *Particular Narrative*, is that he came to a true sense of his guilt and resolved to make a full and perfect discovery; that he wrote his account freely and voluntarily, having desired to be confined to an apartment and kept without conversing with any person until he had finished it; and that he finished on October 31st, afterwards attesting the account on oath before the Lord Mayor, in the presence of the Earl of Bridgewater. What he

revealed was " a horrid and damnable design of charging the Presbyterians with a pretended plot against the present Government and religion" ; and his " wicked and malicious instigators " were the Marchioness of Powis, the five Popish Lords in the Tower, and their accomplices—Mrs. Cellier coming in under the last heading.

On the morning of November 1st the Lord Mayor came to Whitehall to deliver to the King and Council Dangerfield's sworn information. The charges against Mrs. Cellier were taken first, and Susan Edwards testified to the carrying of messages from her to Dangerfield. These Mrs. Cellier herself admitted to be in her handwriting. She admitted also the hiding of papers in her house, but at Dangerfield's request ; and the asking of Gadbury to calculate Dangerfield's nativity. She says that to the Council she " unfeignedly told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The Lord Chancellor Bridgewater told her nobody would believe a word she said, and that she would die. " I know that, my lord," she replied, " for I never saw an immortal woman in my life ! " But she knelt to the King and begged that she might not be tortured. " The Law would not suffer it," Charles assured her. " Such things *are* done in Newgate," she asserted.

Lady Powis was called, and denied that she had seen " Willoughby " above three times in her life, or that he had lodged in Powis House with her knowledge. She admitted the payment to Mrs. Cellier of 10*s*. a week for his keep, but contradicted his other statements, such as that she had thanked him for his diligence in the matter of Strode, that she had received through his agency a letter from a priest at Peterley and had read it aloud in his presence, etc., etc.

The next day Gadbury was called, to admit that he had seen Dangerfield once or twice at his house with Mrs. Cellier, and that he might have cast his nativity, under the name of " Thomas." After a short re-examination of Mrs. Cellier, the Privy Council decided that she was to be sent to Newgate and Gadbury to the Gatehouse. Lord Castlemaine, who had not yet been heard, was committed to the Tower, whither Lady Powis followed him

two days later. Mrs. Cellier, whose courage seldom deserted her, was overcome at the thought of Newgate. She knew that prison and its ways too well. Moreover, she implies that she was expecting a child ; and childbirth in Newgate was a terrible thing, as her visits to women in that condition had taught her. As she left Whitehall she had such convulsions, she says, that she had like to have died at the Gate. As a matter of fact, she was fairly well treated in Newgate, lodging in Richardson's own house and meeting with civility from both Richardson and his wife. This did not, however, prevent him from setting a trap for her. From her window she saw Dangerfield at a window opposite, in the gaol itself. He began a conversation at once, telling her that he was sorry for her confinement, but could not possibly help what he had done.

" Bloody villain," was her uncompromising reply, " I am not confined ; for stone walls and iron bars do not make a prison, but a guilty conscience. I am innocent, and gain that here which my enemies did not intend me for. I have now nothing to do but to serve God ; but you are confined and one of the Devil's slaves."

He showed her his arms, and said that he had been so miserably tortured that he could not bear it, and was forced to accuse her and others to save his own life. He urged her to turn King's evidence and swear what Shaftesbury and his Confederate Lords wanted. They would pay her £10,000 if she would say that it was the Duke of York who had given the paper found in the meal-tub, and had bidden her set Dangerfield on to kill Shaftesbury.

Mrs. Cellier's retort was to call him " worse than his elder brother, Judas ! " But this did not prevent him from making another approach to her the next morning, attracting her attention by throwing small pieces of coal at her window. When she consented to open it and listen to him, he suggested that she should say Lord Peterborough had given her the paper, and Sir Allen Apsley had given her £1,000 to get Shaftesbury murdered. Indignantly she shut down her window ; but all day he " hancred about the window, shedding Crokadile tears, holding up his

hands, and making beseeching signs," until at last she reopened the window and asked, " Bloodthirsty ingrateful villain, what have you to say to me? "

Now he was full of penitence, and, if only she would promise he should be pardoned, was ready to write out the whole story, after which he would throw it into her room, tied to a coal. But the conversation was brought to an abrupt end; and Captain Richardson, afraid perhaps that she would convert Dangerfield rather than he her, pretended just to have found out that they were talking together, and had the window-shutter nailed up on that side of her room, so that there should be no more conversations.

On November 4th the Privy Council continued their examination of the victims of Dangerfield's charges. Mrs. Cellier was questioned as to some letters which she had tried to smuggle out of Newgate, but which had been intercepted and read. " What crime is it to write home? " she demanded. None, admitted the Lord Chancellor; but why had she written that her maid Margaret Jenkins should be sent away? She had not done so. Yes, they had it under her own hand; and Sir Thomas Dolman began to read a letter, in which she declares that the words " Send Margaret into the country " had been interpolated.

What had she written to Mr. Gadbury? she was asked. " I called him ' friend,' " was the answer, " and told him his last visit would make me always esteem him so." The letter was to this effect: " I know I am the talk of the town; but what do the Judicious say of me, for it is that I value, and not the prate of the Rabble? Are all my summer friends flown? Is my Knight against me too? When will Jupiter come into Gemini? "

The coming of Jupiter into Gemini, suggested the Lord Chancellor, meant the restoration of the Roman Catholic religion. How long had Mr. Gadbury been a Roman Catholic? " I have always thought him a Church of England man," Mrs. Cellier replied. " Come, Mr. Gadbury," said the Lord Chancellor, as the astrologer was brought into the room, " you said you said you did not speak in astrological terms to women. But Mrs. Cellier has told all." " My lord, she can say no harm of me if

she tell the truth." "Mr. Gadbury," interrupted Mrs. Cellier, "I never said nor knew any evil of you. I only said you feared the Kingdom would never be quiet till Jupiter came into Gemini."

The policy of the Council examiners was to induce in the witnesses a belief that one had either betrayed or spoken falsely against another; and they succeeded in breaking a many years' friendship between Gadbury and Mrs. Cellier. They did not, however, succeed in quelling the lady's spirit. Was she with child? one of them suddenly asked her. She was not certain. But she had said so in one of her letters, continued her questioner, and that it would keep her from any stricter examination. "No, my lord, I have no reason to think so. This is a time in which no compassion is shown to sex, age, or condition!"

The duel between "the Popish midwife" and her enemies on the Privy Council continued. On November 7th she was confronted with her former maid, Margaret Jenkins; for, though she had not, as was alleged, directed that Margaret should be sent into the country, she had dismissed her from her service. Dangerfield was brought in, too, and allowed by the Council to cross-examine the maid. This he did in a way very hurtful to Mrs. Cellier. According to his own account, he elicited from Margaret that "we (Mrs. Cellier and himself) lived in such a manner together in Powis House that the old man, her husband, was sent up thither to keep us honest"; and the reason for her dismissal was that she gave some information of this to Mrs. Cellier's daughter.

Mrs. Cellier does not record this cross-examination of Margaret by Dangerfield; but she says that when the Lord Chancellor announced to her that they were producing Margaret, who had told them all—"The truth comes out, for all your cunning," he sneered—she protested that the woman was no lawful witness, being a servant who had been turned away in disgrace. The Council, however, did not support her claim.

Another witness was sprung upon her the same day—Nevill, *alias* Payne, of whom we have heard as being befriended by the Celliers and employed in pamphleteering work. He had since

become a bitter enemy of the lady, whom he held responsible for inducing her husband to withdraw his bail, so that Nevill went back to prison. Nevill attributed Mrs. Cellier's action to certain complaints made about his daughter's conduct. Dangerfield, however, though he was glad to use Nevill as a weapon against Mrs. Cellier, states that the real reason for the withdrawal of bail was that the Lords in the Tower complained that Nevill, while industrious in prison, when out chiefly " followed the play house " !

What Nevill said about Mrs. Cellier was that the commerce between her and Dangerfield was very scandalous ; and he spoke of a suspicion that she had been defrauding the charity which passed through her hands—about £22 a week, collected from all sorts of Roman Catholics.

It is fortunate for Mrs. Cellier's moral reputation that the character of her detractors was so bad, and Dangerfield's especially. Indeed, not only Lady Powis, Mrs. Cellier, and Lord Peterborough (whom he was also trying to sweep into his net), but even the wretched Nevill protested to the Council that so infamous a person's word should not be allowed to harm them. Dangerfield calmly records these protests.

Still the ordeal went on ; and still Mrs. Cellier refused to be crushed. Sir William Waller came to visit her in Newgate, with promises of reward for a " discovery " and threats of what would happen if she pressed for a trial. She refused to be moved by either, and told him " she was no Distressed Damosel to use his service to fetch her out of this enchanted castle ! "

On November 27th she was again before the Council, where a new witness, Adams, accused her of having been with Dangerfield and him in the Devil tavern, where she had talked of there being no plot except a Presbyterian plot. She had also insisted on the Duke of York's health being drunk. " Pray, my lord, what crime is it ? " she demanded of the Lord Chancellor, who agreed it was none. Then Adams accused her of having told " a bawdy story." The King, amused, insisted on hearing it. Adams pretended great reluctance and stammered, till she herself said that she had asserted that, if she did not lose her hands, she could

get money as long as men kissed their wives. "By the oath I have taken," Adams broke in, "she said their mistresses too!" "Did I so?" enquired Mrs. Cellier. "Pray what else do they keep them for?" The Lord Chancellor commented, "That was but witty," and the King, "'Twas but natural to her practice"; and the incident closed.

Another attempt to win her over to a confession was made by her gaoler Richardson, as he was conducting her to the Privy Council on January 9th; but he had no more success than Waller, if we can believe what she says about the interview. It is curious, however, that on this very day she is alleged to have joined with Gadbury in making an accusation of treason against Sir Robert Peyton, the man whom she had been partly instrumental in bringing over to the Court side. Peyton denied any treason, but later in the year admitted to the House of Commons that he had engaged, through Peterborough, in negotiations with the Duke of York—which in the eyes of the Commons amounted to treason. His fellow-members expelled him from the House, and Sir William Williams, the Speaker, in pronouncing sentence, admonished him: "You have sat between the Devil and the Witch, Mr. Gadbury and Mrs. Cellier."

It is possible that what really happened at the Privy Council was not that Mrs. Cellier and Gadbury accused Peyton of treason, but that admissions were drawn from them both about Peyton's bringing-over to friendship with the Duke. This might easily be done without a reconciliation between "the Devil and the Witch," which certainly does not seem to have taken place. So perhaps we may believe Mrs. Cellier's picture of herself as bent on being brought to trial herself and declining to get out of it by bearing witness against others. Toward a House of Lords Committee, who next took her in hand, she was very bold in her carriage. Her trial must be by "twelve Commons of England," she claimed, "in a court of judicature." "Your trial will come soon enough," she was assured, to which her retort was, "Blessed be God, then I hope the play is near an end, for tragedies seldom end before the women die!"

All efforts to make her shift her ground failed. After Richardson

had been unsuccessful with her he cut off her husband's visits to Newgate, except on one occasion, for a brief interview, in eleven or twelve weeks. Her formal petitions, both for her release and for permission to see her husband and children, were ignored. In money her imprisonment cost her and Peter Cellier much above £1,000 ; and all this while, she complains, Dangerfield was being visited by persons of considerable quality, with great sums of gold and silver, to encourage him in his new villainies !

Dangerfield was, indeed, after he had made what at present he stated to be a full discovery of all he knew, pardoned and released from Newgate. On November 2nd the House of Commons had prayed the King to grant him a pardon and take him into his Royal care. He had already given orders, replied Charles, for the drawing up of a pardon for all treasons and misprisions of treason. However, Dangerfield had advice that the pardon was defective and applied to the Commons, who prayed the King again for a full and general pardon. A new document was prepared, but even this did not satisfy Dangerfield. On November 29th he made a further petition to the Commons, who thereupon appointed a committee. The result was delay ; and, as we shall see, the acuteness of Mrs. Cellier turned to good use against Dangerfield the incomplete character of the Royal pardon. It is curious that the previous general Newgate pardon should have been forgotten.

For the present, however, the new Royal pardon seemed to be sufficient ; and Dangerfield lost no time before making his bow as a Crown witness in the Court of King's Bench. Here, on November 25th, Lane and Knox stood their trial for a misdemeanour, to wit, conspiracy to defame the King's evidences, Oates and Bedloe. Dangerfield was called to prove that part of the conspiracy which related to the charge against Oates of an offence against Lane. He related how he had released Lane from the Gatehouse, at the instigation of Lord Castlemaine and Lady Powis, and how, when Knox had been set free also, through the agency of Nevill, *alias* Payne, the scheme was worked up. Knox, he said, gave him some " informations " against Oates. These he

sent to the Lords in the Tower and thence, by their direction, to Nevill " to enlarge upon, I suppose." Through Mrs. Cellier they came back to Dangerfield, with instructions to have an affidavit drawn up for Lane to swear to. So ready was Lane that before he had even read the affidavit he exclaimed, " Yes, I can swear it ! " (The Lord Chief Justice grimly remarked that he could believe that.) But Dangerfield took him to a justice of the peace, and the oath was duly administered.

This was the substance of Dangerfield's evidence. He was, however, for the first and last time before Scroggs, allowed to give it as he pleased and at great length. He made much of his own importance in the affair, and was careful to implicate deeply Lord Castlemaine, Lord and Lady Powis, and Mrs. Cellier. To corroborate his story of Lane and Knox at Powis House he called Susan Edwards ; but she said she had never seen Lane, and she could not recognise Knox, so that she was scarcely a satisfactory witness.

Lane's defence was hopeless. Knox pleaded that, if Dangerfield could be taken in by Lane's falsehoods, so too could he, without guilt of collusion. But Scroggs summed up heavily against both of the defendants, and the jury, without leaving the court, found both guilty. Knox was sentenced to a fine of 200 marks, and one year's imprisonment, Lane to a fine of 100 marks, one hour in the pillory, and a year's imprisonment.

Dangerfield's pen was busy toward the close of 1679, when he produced his *Particular Narrative*, his chief account of the happenings since the meeting with Mrs. Cellier in Newgate the previous April. This was printed by special command of the House of Commons. He followed it up in 1680 with his *Second Narrative*, which was designed to fill up the gaps in its predecessor and supply more documentary evidence. We have quoted sufficiently from the *Particular Narrative* to show the nature of the work. It may be said of it, however, that it is certainly a more plausible production than Oates's *True Narrative*, in spite of the way in which the author's infamous character is allowed to show through. In style, also, it is far superior to Oates's work, so as to cause some wonder how Dangerfield, with the life he had led from childhood,

had managed to acquire so much more skill as a writer than the other.

There was a very curious sequel to Dangerfield's publication of his *Particular Narrative*, in the appearance, at the beginning of 1680, of *An Exact and True Narrative*—there was not much originality of titles in these various pamphlets—by Colonel Mansell. This is a long account, prefaced by " a solemn address to all true English Protestants," denouncing " the bloody and deceitful men . . . our Romish adversaries." Dangerfield is not spared, though, says Mansell, " I do really believe the Devil and his Jesuits never sent a more simple child upon their errand ! " He quotes Dangerfield's pamphlet very extensively, only correcting him in some points where his own knowledge enables him to do so. He does not doubt the truth of Dangerfield's version of the plot against the Presbyterians. So we find, as Roger North says, " Mansell turned author on the Captain's side."

In spite of the fact that he had his pardon in November 1679, it was not until the following March that Dangerfield made his second appearance as King's evidence in a court of law. Arising out of what he had said about Lady Powis sending him on errands to a priest concealed at Peterley, an accusation was now brought by him against Webb, in whose house he said that the priest was. The evidence which he professed to produce, however, was deemed insufficient, and Webb was acquitted.

A more important test of his skill as an informer next seemed to be near at hand. On April 30th Mrs. Cellier appeared at the King's Bench Bar, having at last succeeded in forcing the Crown to prosecute her, on a charge of high treason. She pleaded " Not Guilty," and asked for a fortnight in which to get her witnesses together. This Lord Chief Justice Scroggs granted. When, however, May 4th arrived Gadbury, who with Dangerfield was to be the backbone of the Crown case, was ill, and there was another postponement, until the next term. Mrs. Cellier complained of the inconvenience of this to her husband, who had a lawsuit pending. " Why," enquired Serjeant Maynard, " could not your husband follow his lawsuit without you ? " " Because he is a stranger and does not understand the Law."

" Then you do, gentlewoman ! " remarked Maynard, in apparent admiration. " No, sir," she protested ; " but I have enough to make a Country Justice."

This Mrs. Cellier was to demonstrate very soon, at Dangerfield's expense. But an event of evil omen for the informer had already occurred. On May 11th the Middlesex grand jury had ignored the bill against the Marchioness of Powis, whose treason was to have been proved mainly on his evidence. He may perhaps have consoled himself with the thoughts that Mrs. Cellier lacked Lady Powis's aristocratic connections, and that when once he took his stand in court he had much to say about her which might be expected to influence a King's Bench jury.

## II

On June 11th, 1680, Mrs. Cellier duly appeared before Lord Chief Justice Scroggs to answer a charge of high treason, for " contriving to kill the King." The first of the Crown witnesses was Gadbury, who said at once that he knew of no plot, except one to bring Sir Robert Peyton to the King's interest, in which indeed Mrs. Cellier was concerned. When confronted with an attestation which he had drawn up for the Privy Council, reflecting much more seriously on Mrs. Cellier, he admitted that when he made that attestation, as a prisoner in the Gatehouse, he had heard that she was to support two other witnesses in swearing treason against him, and therefore " raked up every trifle " against her, to lessen the credit of her evidence ; but, if he had thought she was really engaged in treason he would have discovered it before. She had done him the greatest injury in the world, but he was unwilling to speak anything contrary to the truth. He had heard her talk of a " Nonconformist Plot." Also, when he said to her, several times, that the Popish plotters would be destroyed, she answered that she was afraid the nation would be destroyed first.

On one occasion, Gadbury went on, he was walking with her through Westminster Abbey, when she remarked that it had once been filled with Benedictine monks: "'and,' saith she, 'what if it should be so again?'" "What did you say to that?" demanded Scroggs. "I only smiled to hear a woman's discourse." "You make all the company laugh," was Scroggs's comment. But he could not get the astrologer to admit that Mrs. Cellier had said she *hoped* the Abbey would be filled with Benedictines again or the Temple with friars.

When the King was very ill at Windsor (August 1679), Gadbury allowed, Mrs. Cellier had consulted him as to whether His Majesty would live or die; but it was her fear lest he should die. His answer had been that he would not meddle with the matter. "I see you are afraid of me," she said, "I will go to some other astrologer." She had also asked him something about Mr. Dangerfield, how to get him out of prison—something about some papers which he was to seize, which concerned Mr. Bedloe; and he had calculated a "scheme," which he had since known to be for Dangerfield, though he did not know it at the time. Mrs. Cellier had simply given him the person's hour of nativity, wanting to know if he was to be trusted to collect monies. His first knowledge of Dangerfield was when he himself came before the King and Privy Council.

This was all that could be got out of Gadbury. "Brother," remarked Scroggs to the Attorney-General, "you are mistaken in your Evidence!" "We are in this," was the reply, "but I hope we shall not be mistaken in others." With that Dangerfield was put forward, against whom Mrs. Cellier at once excepted. "Why so?" asked the Lord Chief Justice. "You must show some reason, and then we will do you justice, in God's name." "If I can prove that he was whipped and transported, pilloried, perjured, etc., he is no witness." She went on to tell of his threats against her witnesses when she was last at the King's Bench in May; he had struck one and threatened to kill others if they appeared again. Scroggs insisted that she must show some record of a conviction. "He has been indicted for burglary," she replied. "Was you indicted for burglary?" Scroggs

is represented to have asked Dangerfield. "I will take it at their proof," answered the King's evidence.

When Mrs. Cellier went on to talk of forgery, Recorder Jeffreys pointed out that it was not what the law called forgery. She meant counterfeiting guineas. Finally, after a witness had been produced who had actually seen Dangerfield punished by "burning in the hand," Scroggs allowed that she had proved a conviction for felony, and asked Dangerfield to produce the pardon which he pleaded against that. Dangerfield left the court to fetch the pardon, in the meantime servants' evidence being heard to show Mrs. Cellier's association with him. The most positive was that of the dismissed Susan Edwards. "You were very often together in your chamber," said Susan to her mistress. "Who gave you your clothes?" demanded Mrs. Cellier indignantly, if irrelevantly. "My father. They are none of yours, I never see you have but two suits at one time."

"Did you ever see anything dishonourable by me?" Mrs. Cellier asked. "Her husband was gone to church one morning, and he was with her in her chamber," said the servant. Scroggs remarked that the husband had best take care how he went to church! By this time, however, he thought that the prosecution had said enough on the subject. "I can't see why you should prove this matter too far," he added. But Jeffreys answered that Susan was a civil young woman, and she was allowed the last word: "She said she would do my business for me, and I go in danger of my life." With that she went down the body of the court, "prating very impertinently," Mrs. Cellier states, until at length she was thrust out of court.

Dangerfield, after about half an hour's absence, returned, bringing his pardon in a black box. His entry was greeted with laughter and cries of "Here comes the Black Box!" from a crowd which only a few weeks back had eagerly been discussing the matter of the Duke of Monmouth and another "Black Box." Dangerfield opened his box. Strange to say, however, the pardon which he produced was defective, there being no mention of felony in it. His evidence must be laid aside, said Scroggs. "Such fellows as you, sirrah, shall know we are not afraid of

you. . . . It is notorious enough what a fellow this is, he was in Chelmsford gaol. I will shake all such fellows before I have done with them."

"My lord, this is enough to discourage a man from entering into an honest principle," Dangerfield complained. Scroggs's retort was swift: "What? Do you, with all mischief that Hell hath in you, think to brave it in a court of justice? I wonder at your impudence, that you dare look a court of justice in the face, after having been made appear so notorious a villain." Summing up, he told the jury that there was only one witness against the accused, and that one not direct. The verdict was, "Not Guilty"; whereon Mrs. Cellier fell on her knees and cried, "God bless the King and the Duke of York!"

For the moment she was free, after thirty-two weeks as a prisoner, twenty-two of them in Newgate. Not so Dangerfield; for, when asked if he had bail for his good behaviour, he was unable to find it at once and was in consequence committed to the King's Bench prison. Here he found himself locked up with Knox, Lane, and others, who had a grudge against him as a witness against them, and "not only rudely assaulted him, but menaced him with nothing less than murder." By payment to one of the prison officers he had himself put, for safety, in a kind of dungeon on the Common-side of the prison. In five days' time, by means of a *habeas corpus*, he was brought to the bar, to furnish bail. Then the general Newgate pardon of June 1678, which he had so curiously failed to produce at the Cellier trial, turned up; and, as it covered felony, which the other pardon did not, Scroggs released him.

A week later, on June 23rd, the Court of King's Bench saw Dangerfield again. The Earl of Castlemaine was on his trial, for high treason, and the two witnesses on whom the Crown relied were Oates and Dangerfield. When it came to Dangerfield to testify, Castlemaine excepted against him as a convicted felon. But the pardon of the previous June was produced, whereon the accused asked for, and was granted, counsel to argue the point whether a man who had been "burnt in the hand" could be a witness. The argument was carried on at

great length by Sir Creswell Levinz, Attorney-General, Lord Castlemaine's counsel, and the Lord Chief Justice; and at last Mr. Justice Raymond, who was assisting Scroggs, was sent to the Justices of the Common Pleas for advice. He returned with the answer that a general pardon would not restore a man as witness after outlawry for felony; but, when a man was burnt in the hand, then they looked upon that as a kind of more general discharge than the pardon alone would amount to. In other words, Dangerfield was an eligible witness.

The most serious item in his charge against Castlemaine was that, on the day after he had visited the Lords in the Tower and had been approached by them to attempt King Charles's murder, he called on the Earl, who, looking on him with a very austere countenance, asked why he refused the business he was taken out of prison for. "Would your lordship have me kill the King? I suppose that is the business," said Dangerfield. "Yes, it is," Castlemaine answered, and fell into such a fury that Dangerfield fled from the room and down the stairs. Castlemaine, he added, was in the habit of calling Charles "the Tyrant" in his familiar discourse.

Castlemaine in his defence, after dealing with Oates, produced the records of Dangerfield's convictions. Then, coming to the charges against himself, he admitted having been very angry with Dangerfield in June 1679 for having gone on some matter to the Lords in the Tower, in his name, but without warrant from him. He produced Mrs. Cellier to testify that he had gone to her and demanded why she had sent such a rascal to him, whom he would bid his servants kick if she sent him again. Mrs. Cellier said that she had told Dangerfield not to mind that, for Lord Castlemaine was a very good man, who might be angry one moment, pleased another. But, when she had wished to send Dangerfield on another message to his lordship, he had said, "Pray, madam, do not send me thither, I would rather go an hundred miles!"

As Dangerfield had assigned Castlemaine's outburst of anger with him to August, this evidence of its actual occurrence in June, in quite different circumstances, was very damaging.

Lady Powis and Mrs. Cellier also bore witness to other false statements of Dangerfield's; and the Lord Chief Justice, in his summing-up, asked the jury to see how far they ought to consider his testimony. He emphasized the completeness of the proof of bad character. "Whether the man of a sudden be become a saint by being become a witness," he said, "I leave you to consider." There were two witnesses against Lord Castlemaine. If they believed but one (Oates), that was not sufficient. Justices Jones and Raymond concurred; and the jury had no difficulty in finding a verdict of "Not Guilty."

In spite of his ill-handling by the Lord Chief Justice, however, Dangerfield was not crushed. He might be invalidated from giving evidence again in a court of law. "But for all that," says Roger North, "he was encouraged in a manner past all belief; had a pension, walked about well-dressed, huffing and swaggering, as one of the capital discoverers of the plot; and, in suitable company, had due respect paid according to that quality." If he could not testify in court, he could write. "His pen had never been in the pillory"; and it was not long before he published a defence of himself, and the charges he had meant to make at Mrs. Cellier's trial, in the pamphlet, *The Case of Tho. Dangerfield*. This was announced as "written by the hand of an indifferent person"; but in it Dangerfield speaks in the first person throughout.

We have already alluded to this work several times. If disingenuous, or rather regardless of the truth, it is an able production, worthy of one whom North calls "a Fourb of bright parts, to whom Oates and Bedloe compared were a brace of blockheads." It exhibits its author (if he wrote it unassisted) as a man of some learning, who can quote Seneca and Sallust in the original, and Lucian and other writers in translation. It shows him also ready to stand up boldly to Scroggs, outside a court of law; though in view of Scroggs's unpopularity, this was not very dangerous. Alluding to the Lord Chief Justice's scathing remarks on his character at the Old Bailey, he says: "His Lordship differs from the sense of the Blessed. Heaven rejoices at the conversion of a sinner, his Lordship storms at mine!"

And, further, " it was an high reflection upon the King's honour to raise from the tomb of silence, to the ruin of a pardoned subject, the ghosts of buried crimes."

But there was a greater raiser of ghosts upon Dangerfield's tracks than Sir William Scroggs. Mrs. Cellier on her release sat down at once to write an account of her trial and a vindication of herself, to which she gave the provocative name of *Malice Defeated*. Dangerfield professed to attribute the authorship of this to a certain " lowsie Dominican Fryar," Anderson, *alias* Munson ; but Mrs. Cellier's own hand is clearly revealed, even if she had help in the composition. She tacked on to the end of the book a final chapter, " The Matchless Picaro," of which we have already heard, cataloguing Dangerfield's crimes with considerable thoroughness, so that those who did not know his record through the evidence given at the Cellier and Castlemaine trials now had it set forth for them plainly in black and white.

Mrs. Cellier says in a postscript to the reader, dated August 21st, 1680, that she finished the account of her trial on July 2nd,[1] and that sheet F of her book was in the press when, on August 16th, a messenger from Mr. Secretary Jenkins appeared, seized the sheet, and carried her and her printer off to his master. Jenkins made them both give bonds to appear before the Privy Council and meanwhile to print no more. We may infer that some copies of the book had already got into circulation. It would indeed have been a pity if that had not been so.

It was not for love of Dangerfield that the Crown descended on Mrs. Cellier and her printer, as will be seen. Dangerfield took up his own defence by publishing *Tho. Dangerfield's Answer*, which is described as " wrote by the hand of Tho. Dangerfield, a lover of truth undisguis'd." This is not so much a vindication of himself (for there were so many things which he could hardly attempt to explain away) as a scurrilous invective against Mrs. Cellier. He states that when married to her first husband, a city merchant, about twenty years ago, she had an intrigue with a negro servant, the result of which was " a tawny-fac'd boy,"

[1] This must be the shorter pamphlet, *The Triall of E. Cellier.*

whereon her husband left her and went abroad. She married again and had several children before her second husband died. Then she turned procuress, "as she herself has often told me, to a certain great person." After some years at her disreputable trade, during which she replenished her purse, she found matters getting too warm for her, and, going back to the City, she set up as a midwife. She persuaded old Cellier to marry her, to the great lamentation of his family, and moved to Arundel Street. She was useful to Cellier in his business, but betrayed him with fresh gallants from time to time.

As sole proof of any of his statements Dangerfield prints what he alleges to be a letter written by Mrs. Cellier to a Spanish lover, which fell by mistake into wrong hands. In no sense can this *Answer* be called an "answer" to the final chapter of *Malice Defeated*. Mrs. Cellier quoted records which with little trouble could be verified. Dangerfield replied with bare assertions, without a single document beyond an easily concocted letter.

The Crown's way of dealing with Mrs. Cellier was quite different. It was proposed to pin her down to her statements in *Malice Defeated*. But she was not dismayed by the prospect. When she appeared before the Privy Council on August 18th she stated that she had published the book because she wished to come before them again; and she definitely accused Waller, Mansell, Dangerfield, and their confederates of high treason, by endeavouring to raise a rebellion and conspiring against the life of the Duke of York. This she offered to prove. The Council promised her a hearing; the following day they took security from her to appear at the King's Bench Bar when term commenced.

It is, however, in another court that we next see her, when, on September 11th, she appeared before Baron Weston at the Old Bailey, on the charge of publishing a libel. In her *Malice Defeated* the Crown professed to find various "false, feigned, and scandalous words," aspersing His Majesty, the Protestant religion, our laws, government, magistrates, counsellors of state, courts of judicature, the King's evidence, and the public justice

of the kingdom ! The indictment was opened by Robert Dormer, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, who laid much stress on her allegations of starvation and torture in Newgate, and her attacks on the evidences, " the hangman's hounds for weekly pensions," as she had called them.

Mrs. Cellier replied by contesting the point whether she had written *Malice Defeated*. She had to admit that she had spoken of it as " my book." She might, however, say " This is my fan," without it following that she had made the fan !

Weston took her to task severely for insinuating that the murder of Charles I. was a sufficient ground for her renunciation of Protestantism. " You are an impudent lying woman," he said, " or you had a villainous lying priest that instructed you to begin your book with such an insinuation against the best of religions."

As witness against her charge of torture in Newgate, Prance was called, who denied that he had been tortured and asserted that Captain Richardson had taken great care of him ! On the other hand, several of her intended witnesses failed to respond to their names. In their absence, she apologised for not being able to make her defence as fully as she should have done. She was a poor ignorant woman, she pleaded, and had thought she might publish what others said and told her. She had offended in ignorance, if she had offended.

Weston replied that he believed that there were more wits than hers concerned in the book, and in his summing-up attacked two passages in particular. One was that torture was employed in Newgate. For the other, while he passed over what she had said about Dangerfield, he fastened on the words : " When His Majesty shall please to make it as safe and honourable to speak the truth as it is apparent it hath been gainful and meritorious to do the contrary, their villany will not want witnesses to testify the truth of more than I have written." So she supposed, continued the judge, that the King, by countenancing lies and giving pensions to liars, choked the truth.

The jury after a short retirement returned a verdict of Guilty—" at which there was a great shout." She appealed

for mercy, as a woman, and for remembrance of the constant loyalty of her family and herself. Sentence was not pronounced until Monday the 13th, and she spent the week-end in Newgate. On Monday Recorder Jeffreys fined her £1,000, and ordered that she should stand in the pillory for one hour each on three separate days ; once near the Maypole in the Strand (not far from her own house), once in Covent Garden, and once at Charing Cross. The most public days were to be chosen for her pillories, and on each occasion parcels of her book were to be burnt before her eyes by the common hangman.

It would appear from a contemporary illustration that Mrs. Cellier did not suffer the worst severities of the pillory ; for she is represented as seated in a chair on it, and holding a large fan or screen. She appears to have dreaded the ordeal not a little. Indeed, Prance accused her of counterfeiting the approach of labour in order to get it postponed. But she suffered nothing worse than a cut or two from missiles, whereas it was not unknown for even a woman in the pillory to be pelted to death if she was very unpopular with the mob.

North suggests as an explanation of the severe treatment of Mrs. Cellier by the Crown that " some topping wise men " thought it best to prevent her from being witness for the defence of people accused of complicity in the Popish Plot. It is obvious, however, from a perusal of *Malice Defeated*, that she really did make very serious accusations, which, though not offensive to the Court party, were offensive to the machinery of government ; and the Court was not, as yet, in a position to rescue those who offended its agents.

With the downfall of Mrs. Cellier—" the Babylonian midwife that hoped to bring sham-plots to bed in this country," as he called her in his *Second Narrative*—Dangerfield's most formidable enemy was gone, and he began to enjoy more easily the fruits of his scheming. Though he could not hope to attain to the position and popularity of Oates, he was, nevertheless, not without cash or credit. From the secret service fund he does not seem to have drawn more than £2 a week ; but even at the end of his last term at Newgate, and afterwards at the King's Bench,

he was well supplied with money from private sources. As to reputation, the House of Commons took him to their bosom as they took all informers. When he asked to be heard at their bar, they welcomed him, and on October 20th listened to what he had to say, subsequently ordering the printing of what survives still as *The Information of Thomas Dangerfield, Gent.*

In this, Dangerfield goes further than he had previously done. Writing to his friend Dr. Halton, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, Sir Leoline Jenkins describes how, in the House of Commons, Dangerfield accused the Duke of York of giving him twenty guineas towards the sham-plot (it is clear from the *Information* that he made the Duke aware that it was a sham, which is the contrary of what he had said in his *Particular Narrative*) and of reproaching him that his courage failed him to kill the King when he had the opportunity. "He spoke," writes Jenkins, "with great ease, clearness, and presence of mind, but I cannot think that any that heard him believed one word he said."

If the Commons did not believe him, at any rate they acted as if they did, since the order for the printing of the *Information* was a step which invested it with an official status. The charges against the Duke of York were, of course, very much to the taste of the House. James left London on October 20th for semi-exile in Scotland. But this did not content his enemies. The Commons rushed through an Exclusion Bill early in November, and on its defeat in the Lords, through the influence of Lord Halifax, sent up an address to the King for Halifax's removal. In the storm which raged against the Duke and all who dared try to save him Dangerfield was bound to prosper. He devoted his activities, however, rather to the pen than to the witness-stand, his rough handling in the first Cellier and the Castelmaine trials still leaving painful memories. He was not a witness against Lord Stafford.

He did indeed venture, on February 8th, to appear in Oates's company at the King's Bench Bar, to accuse John Attwood of being a Popish priest,[1] and helped to secure a conviction.

[1] Attwood had been arrested, on Dangerfield's information, as long ago as October 23rd, 1680, the day of Mrs. Cellier's last pillory. See Luttrell, *Brief Historical Relation.*

Attwood was sentenced to death. But Charles, having dissolved his last Parliament at Westminster, and having made up his mind to deal firmly with the coming Oxford Parliament, respited the priest, and so thwarted the amiable intentions of Oates and Dangerfield.

Dangerfield was also responsible for the arrest, on February 15th, of a man named Edward Sing ; but the charge broke down. Dangerfield's career as a witness was now over, and we know of no further appearance of his in court until the day when the King's Bench Bar saw him for the last time but one, May 30th, 1685. He continued his activities as a writer, and in 1682 produced his *Animadversions upon Mr. John Gadbury's Almanack* and *The Grand Impostor Defeated.* The first was, as its name indicates, an attack on the astrologer's yearly publication of prophecies, of which the 1682 issue reflected on him ; the second was directed against Lord Castlemaine. We also hear, in North's *Examen,* that at last, seeing how the wind blew, he " fell foul upon his Metropolitan Oates, in a quarto pamphlet called *More Shams Yet.*" This pamphlet, which might have been interesting reading, does not seem to have survived.

If Dangerfield really tried to trim his sails to the wind, he does not appear to have met with success. Even before the death of Charles II. the prospect began to grow dark. In June 1684 the Attorney-General commenced proceedings against Williams, the late Speaker, for having, on behalf of the House of Commons, licensed and caused to be printed Dangerfield's *Narrative.*[1] Williams pleaded justification, as merely agent of the Commons, but was fined no less than £10,000, of which he actually paid £8,000 before he was allowed to go free. It was obvious that the action of the Government, now actuated by very different sentiments from those of the Popish Plot period, was not going to be limited to the punishment of Sir William Williams. The day of retribution was at hand for people far more guilty than the ex-Speaker, though it might not come until the throne passed from Charles to James.

[1] Luttrell says the *Narrative* ; but it would seem rather to have been the *Information.*

Not long after Williams's condemnation Dangerfield disappeared from London. North says that, being " near low water " and unable to maintain his luxury and his ladies as formerly, he laid the latter up at Enfield, and " went out upon an expedition errant to fetch supplies, and corresponded to the fair ladies by the name of sisters." Fortunately we have some first-hand evidence about Dangerfield's last months of freedom, in an extraordinary pamphlet embodying the actual diary kept by him between December 2nd, 1684, and March 19th of the following year. To the *Memoires* there is prefixed an address to the reader, presumably from the pen of Charles Brome, the publisher, written when Dangerfield himself was in Newgate.

In this preface we are told of Dangerfield that, " to give him his due, in mitigation of his villainies, he had more of wit, address, and truth in him than all his fellow-evidences put together." He was also a man of method, for " he kept distinct diaries of his motions, receits, and expenses ; and there appears upon his papers of disbursement, in the space of two years and between eight and nine months, 1,450 pounds, fifteen shillings and a halfpenny, well told." It is not to be wondered at that he was near low water !

The actual fragment of diary is an astonishing description of peregrinations about the country, near London and farther afield. Taking leave of his friends at the White Heart on the morning of December 2nd, the writer made his way by Kensington to Uxbridge. After dinner at an inn, he " went to Sr——, who received me well enough." Nor was the visit unprofitable, for as the day's " receits "—each day of the diary is divided under the heads " Adventures, Receits, and Expences "—we have the entry :

| | |
|---|---|
| Received of Sr—— - - - - - | 10*s.* |
| Of a Farmer near Missenden - - - | 5*s.* |
| | 15*s.* |

Next day, after a night at Wendover, he rode the Vale of Ailesbury, and the " receits " are :

| | |
|---|---|
| Of a Farmer in the Vale - - - - | 6*s.* |
| Of a Parson in the Vale - - - - | 6*s.* |
| Of a Woman in the Vale - - - - | 5*s.* |
| Of a Farmer in the Vale - - - - | 5*s.* |
| Lost 5*s.* | 22*s.* |
| Demands not paid 5*s.* | |

On what enterprise was Dangerfield engaged, of which he records the proceeds with such care? He was riding accompanied by his servant Mark; and in the preface to the *Memoires* is a description of the two which looks as if it were taken from a "Hue and Cry" after two fugitive offenders. The master, who travels under the name of Field, is "a proper, black, handsome fellow . . . in second mourning and a short periwig"; the servant "a short, well-set, black young man, pock-broken." Their horses, too, are described. The whole thing is suspiciously like highway robbery. Two able-bodied young men, mounted, with pistols, were scarcely begging for charity.

If we are right in surmising that Dangerfield was now doing some highway work, he had succeeded in removing a reproach which Mrs. Cellier had made against him five years ago, when she wrote: "To give him his due, not one of these records that I know of is for robbing on the highway. He is too tender of his own safety."

On December 4th the adventurer "went to Capt S——s at H., who received me like a Gent." From the captain he collected 10*s.*; and on the same day 6*s.* each from a parson, a farmer, a wheelwright, and a gentleman, and 3*s.* from an alehouse. Next day he was "at Brill, a great Village, and no Money in't." But before night he had made 26*s.*, and he spent 9*s.* 6*d.* at an inn at Bicester, where he slept. On the road between Bicester and Oxford the following morning he collected 48*s.*, including 10*s.* "of a Farmer-Gent." and 6*s.* "of a Brick-Woman."

Yet what did he do when he got to Oxford? He called at Exeter College to see his friend Wesley, who next day, Sunday, came to his inn, the Golden Cross, both for dinner and for supper, and was made "pretty merry." From Wesley he bought a copy of *Lucretius* for 2*s.* A highwayman with *Lucretius*!

In the Oxford neighbourhood during the week he took 69*s.*

(21*s.* 6*d.* " of a Gent of Quality "—" 4 Refuses "), 63*s.*, 60*s.*, 98*s.*, 105*s.*, and 109*s.* Then at Burford on Sunday, December 14th, " being not very well, I did not go to Church ; but in the Evening, I being in the Kitchen, one Warren came in and calling for a Pint of White Wine gives me the Duke of York's Health, and I to him the Duke of Monmouth's ; after which we were very Merry, and so we parted, he promising me a Brace of Pheasants when I returned."

On the 15th " I sat all day on horse-back with considerable success "—to wit, 87*s.*—and at the inn at Stow that evening " got Foxed with my Landlord." On the 16th, in spite of " 1 lost by discovery, 9 refuses," he made 87*s.* again; and on the 17th 107*s.*

The 19th found Dangerfield at Tewkesbury, where he met with ill success, " being much injured by a foolish Parson." Yet he received 17*s.* of " a Divine and Justice too." He went on to Worcester, where he had to buy a horse to replace one that had broken down. With the seller and a friend he went to the Globe, and they got "foxed" on sherry; but not at Dangerfield's expense.

At Bromsgrove on December 23rd Dangerfield passed some hours with an uncle. Christmas morning was spent very quietly at Bridgenorth, where he went to church, riding on to Shrewsbury after dinner. At Shrewsbury his wandering ceased for a while, as his wardrobe required renewing. It is interesting to note that the tailor only took three days to make the clothes, in spite of coming to his customer in the middle of the job, very drunk and troublesome.

It was at Shrewsbury that Dangerfield makes the only mention of his being mistaken for the Duke of Monmouth—a common report about the town, he says. (We shall return to this report later). He now went to stay at the house of a Mr. P——, where he had a welcome and few expenses, though he gave 10*s.* as a New Year's gift to " Mr. Cureton the Parson."

On January 27th he was on the road again, near Kidderminster, making 42*s.*, including 10*s.* from a parson, which compensated for his gift to Mr. Cureton. But he lost his pistols. Then at

Kinford (? Kinfare) next day another parson " had almost put a confounded trick upon me, but that Honest Franck Dee prevented it and so I escaped." The consequence was an entry on the expenditure side, " Spent upon an extraordinary occasion at Franck Dee's at Kinford &c., 24*s*." ; but he borrowed 12*s*. from Honest Franck to make up for this.

Another parson put an affront upon him, " in a notorious manner," on the road to Birmingham, while on January 31st " Ill-luck attended me by an Unhappy Confabulation between two Fools, but the Success of the remaining part of the day in good part did make amends," and he took 76*s*. Another narrow escape befell him and Mark at Middleton, where seven mounted men endeavoured to stop them. They rode for their lives for an hour, leaving three of their pursuers behind. Then, halting, they fought the other four and drove them off, though both were wounded in so doing, Dangerfield rather severely in one arm. A consolation was that, in spite of this " disturbance," they took 66*s*. during the day.

At dinner at the Red Lion, St. Albans, on February 6th, the landlord, who was mayor of the town, gave them news of King Charles's death. They made at once for Enfield, where Dangerfield had a lodging at the house of a Dame Venables. Here he decided to rest and to have some of the companions of his life in London to visit him. Early in this expedition we hear of him writing letters to " my Dear," " my Sister," and " my Friend." Now he sends Mark to London for " my Dear, and Sister Judith, and my Friend," as well as for his trunk and other necessaries. Mark takes also 21*s*. for " my Dear." While waiting for those who are coming, Dangerfield lays in a stock of French wine and of brandy—six bottles of the former and two of the latter at 9*s*. the lot—and spends a day " a-fishing."

" My Dear " was no doubt the young man's reigning favourite ; we do not learn much about her, except that in London she lived " at the Spittle." " Sister Judith," if we may believe North, was no sister of Dangerfield's. He and she had a quarrel at Enfield, because " Sister Ness " wrote to her, asking her to hasten back to London, and he did not want her to go. " My

Friend " was a man. The party stayed at Enfield until February 23rd, at Dangerfield's expense; but Dame Venables only charged 64*s.* for all, including Mark. Landladies were not extortionate in those days! In addition there were sundry bottles of wine and brandy, all carefully noted by Dangerfield in his expenses.

On the 23rd the party went back to London, the coach-fare costing Dangerfield 6*s.* After a visit to a surgeon about his arm he returned to Enfield alone, and went on the road again. On March 1st he was back in London, having made £5 8*s.* by two days' work. He visited " my Dear "; but his conduct might have been the most decorous, for he does not omit to record that he went home to his lodgings to sleep. So, too, the next day, when he entertained the lady and " Sister Judith " at Hackney, where he had an address, he left them at seven in the evening; and on the morrow, when he called at " my Dear's " residence, " Mrs. W—— and Mr. D—— entertained me with much outward respect." He might have been paying a fashionable call.

Another week on the road followed—his last. This time he favoured Kent with his attentions. His best day was at Westerham, where he collected 92*s.*, including 12*s.* each from " a strong-water man's wife at the end of Sandy Lane," " a farmer's crying wife," and " a frank farmer," and 10*s.* from " a timorous farmer." (The unfortunate farmers supplied most of the spoil during the week.) On March 12th he returned to London and gave 21*s.* 6*d.* to " my Dear " and 10*s.* to " Sister Judith," after which he escorted the former and " Sister Ness " to Enfield and laid in some wine and brandy, at the cost of 6*s.* 2*d.* Four days later " Sister Judith " arrived unexpectedly. Whether this caused strained relations, or whether Dangerfield's funds were low, on the 19th the party broke up and went back to Town. He took " Sister Judith " to the Cheesecake House at Mile-End and to dinner at Hackney. Then, setting her down in Paternoster Row, he went to do some shopping and to see the doctor.

With this the *Memoires* end. We trust that we have not quoted at too great length from this most curious of documents. It seems to us to give a picture of its writer which it would be

impossible to imagine otherwise, and at the same time to illustrate vividly a little-known side of life at the period.

One point about which Dangerfield is reticent is his being mistaken for the Duke of Monmouth. He only mentions it incidentally at Shrewsbury. But there must surely have been more basis than that for the wide-spread story of his impersonation of Monmouth and his popular nickname, in his last weeks of life, of " Duke." Two pamphlets, at least, appeared before his death which give versions of the legend. Both are amusing, though they cannot be treated as valuable contributions to history.

*Duke Dangerfield*, " declaring how he represented the D. of Mon—— in the Country, with his miraculous gift of Touching, making Knights and other pranks in Staffordshire," etc., makes Dangerfield purchase a Star and a purple livery coat in Long Lane and go down to Staffordshire, keeping his Star concealed under a " campain coat." The fact of the exiled Duke of Monmouth having been expelled from Brussels helped him in his deception, for the Staffordshire people thought it quite likely that Monmouth had secretly returned to England. To prove his Royal extraction Dangerfield professed to have the gift of touching, and, hanging counterfeit half-guineas of his own coining on " halfpenny tape," he sold them for two guineas each to those whom he had touched. Next he " fell a-Knighting all the scum of the Country," thus bringing £400 into the treasury.

The other work, *Mr. Dangerfield's Answer and Defence against a scurrilous pamphlet*, etc., pretends to be his correction of the Staffordshire tale, and makes him claim to have visited an inn in Cornwall, where he hoodwinked the landlord by disclosing his Star and bestowing a knighthood upon him. This is a mere skit.

Possibly, though his *Memoires* do not admit it, Dangerfield did take advantage of being mistaken for the Duke of Monmouth and gain some money thereby. But it is impossible to look upon his " receits " as being all contributions from sympathisers with the exile. Some of his mishaps with parsons may be explainable by his attempt at such an imposture ; for otherwise he must have fallen in with a curious number of " fighting parsons " ! The

majority of his takings, however, do not look at all like expressions of sympathy for a political cause.

From the sudden cessation of his diary we may suppose Dangerfield to have come into the hands of the authorities about March 20th or 21st. The *Duke Dangerfield* pamphlet attributes his capture to " an old sufferer, John [really Edward] Sing, an honest layman," whom he had twice got put into Newgate as a Jesuit. We know from his diary that at the beginning of his expedition Dangerfield had seen Sing at Kensington. Now apparently Sing had seen him at Mile End, perhaps in the company of Sister Judith, and had dogged him to his lodgings, which were at the Nag's Head Inn, over against Whitechapel Gate. Sing went and informed Mrs. Cellier, and through her the arrest was effected. The woman whom Dangerfield had caused to spend so many unhappy weeks at Newgate had at last the satisfaction of seeing him taken there to await the long-delayed punishment of his offences. There is a poetical justice about this association of Mrs. Cellier with his capture, and there is no reason to doubt its truth, though the only authority for it is the pamphlet just quoted.

Dangerfield was not brought up for trial until May 30th, when he appeared before Jeffreys, now Lord Chief Justice, in the Court of King's Bench. *State Trials* has no report of the case, except a short footnote. But there are a contemporary broadside and a fairly full entry in Luttrell's diary to guide us. The charge against him was high misdemeanour, as the writer and publisher of a scandalous libel, his *Information*,[1] reflecting much upon His present Majesty, whom he had accused of giving him twenty guineas to kill King Charles. Also he had alleged that he had been hired to stifle the Popish Plot and throw it upon the Presbyterians.

After witnesses to prove authorship and publication of the *Information*, Lord Peterborough was called. At the last Northampton Assizes he had recovered £5,000 damages against Heyrick, Dangerfield's printer, for the libel as it affected him. Now he

[1] Both the accounts specify his *Narrative*; but this does not mean his *Particular Narrative*, since that does not put a sinister interpretation upon James's gift of twenty guineas. It was, as we have seen, in his *Information*, given to the House of Commons, that he introduced the accusation against James.

gave evidence as to Dangerfield's introduction to the Court. Colonel Halsall corroborated him. Next came Mr. (Peter) Cellier, of whose evidence we only hear that Dangerfield came once to his house cursing and swearing and said that if he were not better furnished with money he would tack about, for he was sure that the disaffected party would furnish him with money enough.

Lady Powis, and then her husband, followed with evidence as to the falsehoods concerning them; and proof of Dangerfield's various convictions were put in.

Dangerfield's defence, says Luttrell, was "a long harangue against the Papists, and his acquaintance with Mrs. Cellier." The broadside calls it "just such another Cant as his brother Oates made in his Tryal, *viz.* that their Evidence was the Prop of the Protestant Religion (which made great laughter in the Court)." He asserted that the King was both judge and plaintiff, and began to make saucy reflections upon several honest men, until sternly reproved by the Lord Chief Justice. Dangerfield's witnesses either gave him no help or did not appear at all. Jeffreys summed up, telling the jury what a monster of wickedness the man was, and "how the honour of the nation was concerned in seeing such profligated rogues brought to condign punishment." The jury, without going from the box, found a verdict of "Guilty"; and then, according to Luttrell, the Lord Chief Justice ordered an indictment for perjury to be preferred against the prisoner.

In the meantime, sentence was deferred until next term; for it was not until Monday, June 29th, that Dangerfield was again at the Court of King's Bench to hear his fate. This was that he was to stand in the pillory before Westminster Hall gate next day, and before the Exchange the day after; on Thursday he was to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and on Saturday, after a day's rest, from Newgate to Tyburn; and in addition he was to pay a fine of £500, and find sureties for his good behaviour for life.

The sentence was severe. But, in comparison with the sufferings which Dangerfield had been anxious to inflict upon others, it can scarcely be called excessive. Much, moreover, depended on the way in which the corporal punishment was carried out;

and in Dangerfield's case the lashes were not laid on in the same vindictive manner as in the case of Oates. But for an accident he should have survived for some more years of crime, and perhaps, like Oates, for a pension after the Revolution.

A very curious broadside is still preserved in the British Museum, entitled *Dangerfield's Dance*; "giving," as the sub-title sets forth, "an account of several notorious crimes by him committed, *viz.* he pretended to be a Duke and feigned himself to be Monmouth, with several other pranks," etc. Under two woodcuts, one showing Dangerfield in the pillory, and the other showing him being whipped at the cart's tail, are fifty-eight lines of verse, of which the following are a specimen:

> *If 't please Your Highness*, what was your intent?
> Poor Women to deceive, and get their Coyn,
> It is no better than for to Purloyn. . . .
> And so, *Duke Dangerfield*, I bid adieu,
> A thousnad *Lashes* I bequeath to you;
> And hope you may to others warning be
> Never to practice such base Villany. . . .
> To this your Reason cannot chuse but yield,
> And now look to your Hits, *Duke Dangerfield*.

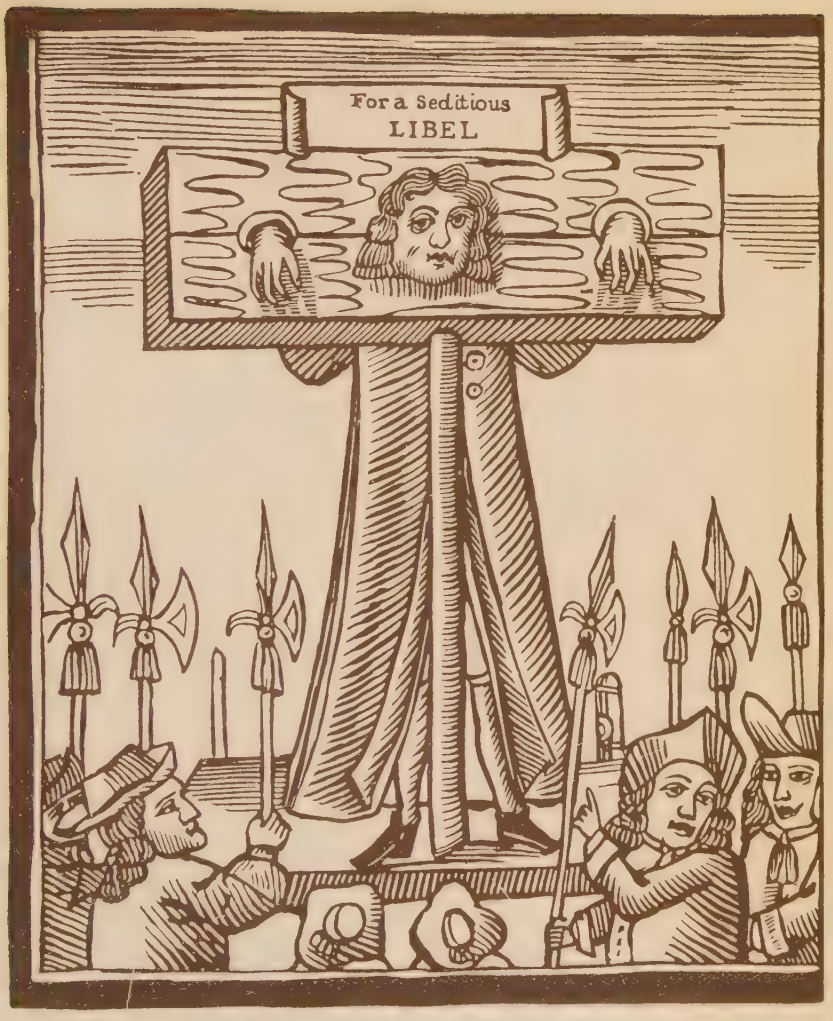
This effusion was obviously earlier than the death of the unhappy wretch, which would have been mentioned had it already occurred. It shows that Dangerfield's recent exploits in the provinces, and his temporary assumption of the rôle of the Duke of Monmouth, had made an impression on the public mind.

The circumstances of Dangerfield's death are fairly clear. The most detailed account is that given by Sir John Bramston in his *Autobiography*. Dangerfield was returning to Tyburn after his second whipping—this was on Saturday, July 4th—and was riding in a coach, guarded by the Sheriff's officers, along Holborn, when a Mr. Francis, of Gray's Inn, who was out with his wife, came up to the coach and spoke to him. Francis was a perfect stranger to the prisoner, and had no business of any kind with him, so we must suppose that it was merely tauntingly that he enquired of him "how he liked his race and how he did after his heats."[1]

[1] We might guess the word to have been "hits," with an allusion to the line above quoted,

"And now look to your hits, *Duke Dangerfield*."

But Francis's own version of his words is in one place, "Have you had your heat to-day? How is it now with you?" and in another simply, "How now, friend, have you had your heat this morning?"




THOMAS DANGERFIELD

*From a contemporary broadside*

Dangerfield, in spite of his condition after the many lashes he had just received, replied furiously, " You are the son of a w——! " Thereupon Francis thrust at him with a light cane he was carrying, which ran into his eye and inflicted a mortal wound.

This horrible act seems to have been unintentional. Bramston says that Francis's cane (a sixpenny bamboo, according to evidence at Francis's trial) was " the smallest that ever I see used, and without any iron ferule or any thinge at the end," and that " it may well be presumed Francis had no designe of killinge, for he had a sword by his side, which was a more likely thing to kill him then that litle cain." Moreover, would Francis have had his wife with him if he had intended such a deed?

Nevertheless, the deed was done, and Dangerfield was carried away to die the next day. At the coroner's inquest a verdict of wilful murder was returned, and ten days later Francis's trial took place at the Old Bailey.

Not much is known of Robert Francis (or Frances, as his name was commonly spelt), except that twenty years previously to this affair he had been a student at Christ Church, Oxford; that he had attended on Sir Joseph Williamson on a mission abroad; and that for twelve years past he had been a member of Gray's Inn. He was not, as Luttrell says, " a notorious Papist," but, as he stated in his dying declaration, an obedient and zealous son of the Church of England. Witnesses to his good character came forward at his trial; and there seems no reason whatever to doubt his statement, made to the Rev. Samuel Smith, ordinary of Newgate, as to how the accident happened. He was with his wife at a coffee-house near St. Alban's, Holborn, when he heard that Dangerfield was coming by. He left his wife with a friend, and, out of mere curiosity to see how the prisoner looked, went up to the coach. What prompted him to use the taunting words he does not say.[1] On Dangerfield cursing him, he struck at him with his cane, which was " furzed and worn out at the end." He

[1] Francis, in his dying declaration, is indignant at scandal having been raised against his innocent wife, as if his jealousy had been the cause of animosity to Dangerfield. Mrs. Francis had never seen Dangerfield in her life, and was " as virtuous a woman as lives." He also repudiates a suggestion, which had apparently been made, that his deed was a mercenary one.

meant to aim at the man's breast, but the carriage moving onward caused the cane to run into his eye.

Francis was tried at the Old Bailey on July 16th, convicted of murder, and sentenced to death. On the 24th he was carried to Tyburn in a coach and executed. Burnet says that great intercession was made on his behalf, but the King would not interpose. On this the usual charge against James of cruelty and religious bigotry has been based. But James (who assuredly had no reason for resenting the slaying of Dangerfield!) would have found it hard to reprieve Francis. Both Anthony Wood and Sir John Bramston point out that Dangerfield had "suffered the law." He was at the time under the protection of the King and his officers, which greatly aggravated the crime of killing him. We have already seen how at the Castlemaine trial the fact that he had been burnt in the hand operated to make him eligible as a witness. Now in death the fact that he had suffered the law, in the pillory and at the cart-tail, gave him a privilege, of no value to him, by turning his unintentional slayer into a wilful murderer!

The end has been reached of "Duke" Dangerfield's story. Embarking on a criminal career in tender years, at the age of about thirty-one he suffered an agonising death, not at the executioner's hands, but as the result of an accidental blow from someone who had no grudge against him. He crowded into fifteen years—to ignore anything that happened before he was sixteen—a most startling record of crimes, convictions, punishments, and escapes, which few, if any, of his contemporaries can have rivalled. His debauchery was a byword, though it does not appear to have appreciably injured his physique. His mendacity, however, was his outstanding characteristic. Oates could beat him at that, it is true; and Oates's lying was the more deadly. It is difficult to attribute any death to Dangerfield's falsehoods, which may be accounted to him for doubtful merit.

At the same time, Dangerfield somehow managed to acquire, in his adventurous life, a sort of culture, or he would not have been able to write as he did. We must either suppose that he had a skilled collaborator in most of his published works, or we must allow that he picked up education rapidly. His reputation, in

his day, of being " a witty rogue " inclines us to the latter view. A coiner quoting Seneca and Lucian, a highwayman picking up a cheap copy of Lucretius, is somewhat of a paradox. But the whole of Dangerfield is a paradox. On his deeds we should be compelled to dismiss him as a miserable ruffian. Yet it seems impossible to let it stop at that. No two words, no sentence, however, can be imagined to describe him adequately. " But there is an end of him ! " as Sir John Bramston says, after his attempt to sum him up.

PSALMANAZAR THE FORMOSAN

# PSALMANAZAR THE FORMOSAN

## I

THE subjects of this and the following section are impostors of a very different kind from Oates, Dangerfield, and their fellow-workers. If the latter can be not unreasonably compared with venomous serpents, an encounter with whom might easily bring death, literary frauds such as Psalmanazar and William Henry Ireland may be likened to harmless snakes. They did no damage except to their own reputations and to the self-esteem of those credulous enough to be taken in by them. Their lies were devoid of malice.

Why then did they lie? The late Andrew Lang in an article on "Literary Forgeries," which he included in his *Books and Bookmen*, roughly analyses the motives of such forgers into piety, greed, "push," and love of fun; to which he later adds desire for notoriety. We shall return to this division of motives when we come to W. H. Ireland. Psalmanazar was not exactly a literary forger. He forged, indeed, a Formosan alphabet and language, inasmuch as he passed off upon the public inventions of his own, which he pretended to have derived from Formosa. But his *Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa* was, otherwise, not a forgery but a fake. The distinction is not wide. Rather, the forger is one kind of faker. The perpetrator of a practical joke, if it is on a sufficiently large scale, is another.

The motives of fakers in general may be analysed under the same heads as those of forgers. In the case of Psalmanazar, piety in no way entered into the imposture. He exhibited fervent piety in his later life, but only after he had abandoned pretence. Greed scarcely actuated him, for he made but little money by his fraud, and, though when repentant he bewailed his former spendthrift living, his excesses do not seem to have

amounted to much. Neither in food nor drink nor dress was he extravagant ; and as to love-affairs, there is a decided impression to be gathered from his *Memoirs* that he was willing his readers should think he had more than was actually the case. Love of fun must be eliminated, if Psalmanazar's writings are an index to his character. They reveal no sense of humour.

What Andrew Lang calls " push," *i.e.* the desire to get a reading for works which, if put forth as new, would be neglected, does not apply to Psalmanazar. There remains the love of notoriety. It is thus that Psalmanazar diagnoses his own symptoms, though the term which he employs is " vanity." As we read his story, we feel that his diagnosis is correct. To some extent the same motive was present also with Oates, Dangerfield, and all the tribe of informers, mixed with the baser stimulus of greed ; and with Ireland, mixed with a perverted humour. In Psalmanazar, vanity appears in purer form. He wished to attain a prominence which his intellectual pride persuaded him he was entitled to, but which his intellectual indolence, fostered by bad training, prevented him from reaching. As for his change of heart, his exemplary later life, they belong to a book on the Mysteries of Conversion, which clearly might be written from divers points of view.

. . . . . .

The birth-year of the man known as " George Psalmanazar " is generally given as 1679, though it might equally well be 1680, on the strength of a statement in his " Last Will and Testament." Writing on April 4th, 1752, he says he is in the seventy-third year of his age. In a document of this kind we should expect accuracy ; but the chronology of Psalmanazar's *Memoirs* is loose, and he makes several statements which cannot be reconciled with the date in his will and favour rather a date as late as 1684. The point is only of importance in so far as, the later he was born, the more wonderful his imposture. If he was only twenty when he gulled the British public with an entirely imaginary history, geography, and language of Formosa, it was clearly more of a feat than if he had reached the age of twenty-four or twenty-five.

Of Psalmanazar's early days we know only so much as he chose

to tell in his *Memoirs*. Therein he excuses himself from mentioning his real name or the country of his birth, adding, however: "Out of Europe I was not born, nor educated, nor ever travelled; but continued in some of the Southern parts of it till about the sixteenth year of my age." He never went farther from his birthplace than the Rhine, on the Continent, and Yorkshire in England.

From the names of places which he gives in connection with his boyhood it is clear that his first home was in the South of France. The writer of the "Advertisement" prefixed to the *Memoirs*, who bases his statements on information communicated by the Rev. Mr. Villette, Psalmanazar's intimate friend for twenty-four years, says that he spoke French very well, "with a spice of the Gascoin accent," and that his mastery of the Languedoc dialect was such that it might be presumed he came from that province.

His family, says Psalmanazar, were zealous Roman Catholics, strongly biased against all Protestants. His father was of ancient but decayed stock, his mother a pious good woman. He was their only surviving child, and when he was but five the father was obliged to leave them and go, for what purpose we are not told, to live in the neighbourhood of the Rhine. In consequence he was entirely in the hands of his mother, who had a small income of her own and did what she could for his education. He protests that he cannot remember he had a single vicious inclination under her care. But when, at the age of six, he began to go to school, a deterioration at once set in.

His first tutors were two Franciscan monks in his native place, the elder of whom, noting in him what he calls an uncommon genius for languages, put him in a high form, with boys twice his age, made a great favourite of him, and, when visitors came to the school, showed him off as the flower of the flock. In spite of his tender years, he quickly rose to be head monitor of the school and was "filled with vanity and ambition to excel," which the indulgent monk failed to restrain.

This was a bad foundation for Psalmanazar's education; but worse was to come. When he was nine, his tutor was transferred to a new post in an archi-episcopal city, twenty-four miles away.

Anxious for his pupil's progress, he suggested to Psalmanazar's mother that he should take him, with some of the other boys, to lodge with him, so that they should be able to attend lectures at a Jesuit college in the city. The mother consented, and in due course Psalmanazar found himself at the college, again, through his old tutor's influence, in a very high class for his age. By hard work he kept his place, and was even moved up at the end of a term. The class above was under a most incompetent teacher, ill acquainted with the classics, who contented himself with telling his pupils stories and instructing them in heraldry, geography, and fortification!

After two-thirds of a year had been wasted, Psalmanazar heard from his mother that a Dominican in their own town was opening a class of philosophy. This he came home to attend. But the Dominican was a poor scholar, and the class was composed of "dunces and rustics," among whom the boy had no incentive to exert himself. Another year was thus wasted, when it was agreed between his mother and his tutor that he should go to a Dominican establishment in the nearest University town for the study of theology. Here, he says, his school seemed to him "a new world," where he was looked upon as "a little raw stripling" and fell quite out of conceit with himself. He gradually ceased to attend lectures, and took to sauntering about the town, looking at the sights. He wrote letters of complaint to his mother, who sent him money to take him to Avignon; and now Psalmanazar's school education was at an end.

The picture which he draws of this education is not flattering to his teachers. He had, of course, considerably before the time when he began to write his *Memoirs*, joined the Church of England, and so had no motive to make the picture unduly favourable to the Franciscans, Jesuits, and Dominicans through whose hands he had passed. He was, moreover, attempting to account for his lapse into what he calls his "vile and abominable life, blended with such mixture of the most unaccountable pride, folly, and stupid villainy."

At Avignon—the first definite place-name, by the way, which Psalmanazar mentions in this part of his book—he endeavoured

to obtain private teaching work, but met with little success. He left the city and went as tutor to two young boys. When, however, his pupils' mother encouraged him to make love to her, "my vanity of being thought more chaste then I really was" held him back, and the lady dismissed him.

Returning to Avignon, he found that a fellow-townsman with whom he had formerly lodged had left, and he was soon penniless. From this time he dates his career of falsehood. First he represented to some friars that he was a sufferer in the cause of religion, his father having used him severely for it; a story "abominably false in every respect" he confesses. But he gained little by it except sympathy. Then he bethought himself of a plan to get back to his mother, a long journey from Avignon. He procured from the proper office a passport, in which he described himself as a young Irish student of theology, who had suffered from persecution in his own country and was on a pilgrimage to Rome.

This new pose involved him in many a lie and was hard to keep up, as he had no knowledge of Irish affairs. Also he had no equipment as a pilgrim, and was reduced to stealing from a church a staff and leather cloak, which had been deposited as a votive offering by some grateful pilgrim. With these and his fluent command of Latin, he made his way along the road, begging of the clergy and better-class people. He made quite good money thus, though he dissipated it again by putting up at inns for the night. Finally he reached home; but his mother was not pleased at the way in which he had wasted what she had spent on his education and urged him to go to his father and see whether he could do anything for him. Accordingly, still in pilgrim's disguise, he set out for the Rhine.

He represents himself as being not yet sixteen. But as he describes seeing by the roadside corpses of soldiers disbanded after the Peace of Ryswick, turned felon, executed and exposed *in terrorem*, he must have been older than sixteen. For his birth-year, as we have seen, appears from his will to have been about 1679 or 1680, and the Peace of Ryswick was made in September 1697.

The journey to the Rhine was a hard one, there being little to be begged from the Calvinist or Lutheran villages to which in time he came. When he reached his father, he found him, though amiably disposed, in very poor circumstances and unable to help him with more than advice. As his pronunciation of Latin and Greek was different from that in Germany and he had no German, he could get no teaching work. Germany, too, had been ruined by the war. The father's advice was to travel on to the wealthier Flanders, Holland, and Brabant, where there would be a welcome for a student. Having been a great traveller himself, he drew up a route for his son to follow and sent him on his way. From this time Psalmanazar saw neither of his parents again.

The pose of an Irish pilgrim was now dropped. Psalmanazar did not inform his father, who, as an upright and religious man, would have stopped him. He forged for himself a new passport, using the old seal, and represented himself as a Japanese convert to Christianity. He explains that with the Jesuits he had been taught something about the Far East, its geography, etc. ; and he trusted to his pregnant imagination to carry him through where knowledge failed. There was a difficulty about the language and writing of his new pretended country ; but that matter we may leave for the present.

His adventures along the Rhine and in the Low Countries were many. At Landau, where there was a French garrison, he was arrested as a spy but escaped with expulsion from the town. He found almsgivers liberal, but, being an extravagant spender, never kept any money in reserve. His clothes became so shabby that at any hostel for pilgrims or strangers he was always herded with the lowest people, so that he became infested with vermin. At Liège he was rescued by an alleged recruiting officer in the Dutch service, who really kept "a grand coffee-house, and billiards, and other games" at Aix-la-Chapelle. To this he took Psalmanazar as a servant and also as a curiosity who might attract customers. Some of the visitors did, indeed, converse with the supposed Japanese and bestow money upon him, most of which his master took.

Psalmanazar, however, was not long at Aix. Sent one day on foot to Spa to fetch his master, he grew disgusted with the journey and decided to return to his parents. But, after passing through Cologne and Bonn, he fell in with an officer of the Elector of Cologne, who persuaded him to enlist. His regiment contained many deserters from the French service, a very profligate lot, who quickly corrupted the raw German recruits mingled with them. Neither drinking, gaming, nor the other favourite amusement of the regiment attracted Psalmanazar. But he admits to having blasphemed with the worst of them. Whether or not out of some curious freak of conscience, to allow himself to do so more freely, he now professed himself an *unconverted* Japanese. In his famous *Description of Formosa*, some years later, he claimed to have been discharged from the regiment as a heathen who refused conversion. But this was not true, the *Memoirs* say. His colonel got rid of him as too tender for the fatigues of a soldier's life.

It was a hard winter at Bonn, where the regiment was quartered, and the unhappy youth, while forced to surrender his uniform, was unable to get back his civilian clothes. Turned adrift in barely enough to cover him, he tramped to Cologne and re-enlisted, this time in a regiment of the Duke of Mecklenburg, composed mostly of Lutherans and in the pay of the Dutch. He described himself as a Japanese heathen, and gave the name of "Salmanazar," taking his inspiration from Shalmaneser in 2 Kings xvii. 3. The spelling, on going to England, he first changed to Psalmanaazaar, and finally to Psalmanazar.

The officers in this new regiment appear to have been a curious set, whose delight was to hear the supposed Japanese heathen disputing on religious matters with his comrades, and especially with the Roman Catholics among them. He had also some practice with the Lutherans ; and, when the regiment in the spring entered Holland, he represents himself as having indulged in extraordinary antics. When a religious service, Lutheran or Calvinist, was being conducted at the head of the regiment, he would turn his back and, facing the sun, make a show of prayers to it in the sight of all. He had a little book with figures of sun,

moon, and stars, having " filled the rest with a kind of gibberish prose and verse, written in my invented character, which I muttered or chanted as the humour took me."

It is rather difficult to credit that such conduct was tolerated openly. But there is no doubt as to his invention of a script, running from right to left, to match his alleged Japanese language ; and he gradually added some grammar, a new calendar, and so on. Events were now at hand which encouraged him to continue and develop his imposture.

Toward the end of 1702, it would seem, Psalmanazar's regiment came to Sluys, where there were already quartered a French and a Scottish regiment in the Dutch pay. The governor of the town was a Scot, Brigadier George Lauder, a relative of whom, Alexander Innes, was chaplain to the Scottish regiment. Between them these two Scots were the means of Psalmanazar's introduction to England.

Psalmanazar tells us in his *Memoirs* that he had broken himself of the horrid habit of swearing he had contracted when he first became a soldier. He had never given way to the other common military vices. He noticed that his comrades were far more shocked by the sarcasms which he levelled at their religious views than if he had indulged himself like them. But he claims that the sober ones, and even some of the ministers of religion, commended him for his defence of virtue, while disapproving of his heathenism.

Soon talk of this curious Japanese came to Brigadier Lauder's ears, and he asked him to his house, together with several officers, the minister of the French (Walloon) church, and the Rev. Mr. Innes. After dinner Psalmanazar engaged in argument with the minister, Isaac d'Amalvi by name, whom he alleges that he worsted. Innes appeared interested, complimented him, and invited him privately to his house to discuss religion, being confident that he would easily convince him.

There can be no doubt that Alexander Innes was capable of the baseness which Psalmanazar attributes to him. Though he became a Doctor of Divinity and assistant preacher at St. Margaret's, Westminster, he did not scruple to publish under his own

name in 1728 a manuscript which a friend of his, Dr. Alexander Campbell, had left in his care. Campbell, after his appointment in 1730 as Professor of Ecclesiastical History at St. Andrews, found to his astonishment that *An Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*, by Dr. Alexander Innes, was, with the exception of a prefatory introduction, nothing but the work he had left with his friend, and forced a public apology and disclaimer of authorship from Innes, who thereupon retired to a good living he had managed to secure in Essex before the scandal.

At present, however, Innes was only a regimental chaplain with longings for preferment. He must have seen something in Psalmanazar which shows that the latter does not entirely exaggerate when he makes himself out to have been such a remarkable young man. To follow the *Memoirs*, Innes frequently invited Psalmanazar to his house, and seldom failed at parting to " clap a small piece of Dutch silver " into a not unwilling hand. The process of conversion of the heathen was not long delayed. Psalmanazar was getting very tired of the hardships and poor pay of military life, of which he had altogether about two years. Innes promised to procure his discharge from the army and to take him to England, and, as soon as he saw him ready to yield, wrote to Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, with whom he seems to have had some acquaintance. To him he represented his interesting *protégé* as having been carried off by Jesuit missionaries from Formosa to Avignon, where all attempts to make a Roman Catholic had failed. To escape the Inquisition he had made his escape to Germany ; and now he was in Holland, ready to be received into the Church of England.

No immediate answer came to this letter ; and Innes appears to have grown anxious lest some other proselytiser should carry off his " Japanese." He resolved to baptise him without waiting for Compton's reply. First, however, he reduced him to a sufficient state of humility by letting him know that he had detected his fraud. He gave him a passage of Cicero to translate into his pretended language, then gave him the same passage over again, compared the two versions, and pointed out their inconsistencies. So seriously did he speak that Psalmanazar expected instant

exposure. But suddenly Innes's brow cleared, and he gave the youth a friendly look. Warning him to be more careful in future, he set his mind at rest.

Psalmanazar had now, therefore, an accomplice ; and it was at the suggestion of Innes that he changed his native land from Japan to Formosa. Doubtless the wily chaplain represented that, while there were some people in England who were acquainted with China and Japan, there was no one likely to have been to Formosa. With an odd forecasting of the future Formosa was made out to be a possession of Japan, not of China. This was probably done to facilitate Psalmanazar's transition from Japanese to Formosan origin.

Having Psalmanazar completely under control, Innes one afternoon sent a message to him that his baptism was fixed for 6 o'clock. At the chapel, to witness the ceremony, were Brigadier Lauder and several officers and gentlemen. Psalmanazar describes himself as greatly troubled in conscience, but consoled by the thought that it was only a " heretic " who was baptising him ! The Brigadier stood godfather to him, gave him his own name, George Lauder,[1] and when the ceremony was over presented him with a pistole.

Innes was thus sure of his convert ; but he wanted something out of the affair for himself, and until he heard from Compton became cold and indifferent towards him. At length the Bishop's letter came, commending Innes and inviting Psalmanazar over to England. It would seem that Innes must have written twice, for he now talked of a scheme to send Psalmanazar to Oxford to teach " Formosan " to a set of gentlemen, who would later go with him to the island to convert the natives. The Bishop must therefore have heard from Innes since Psalmanazar's change from Japanese to Formosan.

For the success of the scheme—or, at least, of that part of it which concerned Psalmanazar's visit to Oxford—it was necessary, as Innes insisted, to get on with the invention of the Formosan language. This was Psalmanazar's business. Innes, with the

[1] Psalmanazar retained the name George throughout the rest of his life, but must soon have dropped the Lauder, of which we hear no mention later.

aid of his kinsman Lauder, secured the young man's discharge from the army ; and he also got together for him a certificate of character from various officers and a minister of religion.

## II

It was now nearing the end of 1703 when the way was opened for Psalmanazar's introduction to England, his home for the remaining sixty years of his life. In the company of Innes he travelled to Rotterdam, where he was introduced into polite and learned society. He says that he was much caressed. There were, however, two flies in his ointment. Some of his questioners about Formosa were evidently suspicious of his tales ; and all he had to wear was some cast-off clothes of his chaplain friend, which were too big for him ! A course which he adopted to meet the first difficulty is certainly strange. He calls it himself " one of the most whimsical expedients that could come into a crazed brain." It was to live upon a diet of raw flesh, roots, and herbs—representing the national diet of the Formosans ! Thanks to a strong constitution, he soon got used to this ; and he took care to use a good deal of pepper and other spices, " while my vanity and the people's surprise at my diet served me for a relishing sauce."

From Rotterdam the pair of impostors proceeded to London, *via* Brill and Harwich. They were soon received by the Bishop of London, and Psalmanazar was launched upon a part-credulous, part-critical world. He says that, among the clergy and the laity, he quickly made a good many friends, but that he had a much greater number of opposers. He was hard put to it to avoid detection. In spite of Innes's warning, he had not devoted much time to increasing his Formosan vocabulary. Fortunately for him, his questioners did not press him with regard to the language or written characters of his supposed country. His complexion was his first difficulty ; for he was very fair, and not at all like a native of a tropical country. He explained this by the difference between those who are exposed to the sun and those who keep

altogether at home, " in cool shades or apartments underground." As he let it be understood that he was the son of a man of considerable standing in Formosa—a king's son, the story later became—he was naturally one of the sheltered class.

The efforts of the sceptical to detect his true nationality by his accent failed. Whether he spoke Latin, French or Italian, he says, his pronunciation was so blended, and not without design, that it had no resemblance to that of an European language.[1] One of his critics, Dr. Richard Mead, the celebrated physician, of whom Johnson said that he " lived more in the broad sunshine of life than almost any man," made a singular mistake. He was positive that Psalmanazar was of either German or Dutch extraction. Now the German tongues were those of which Psalmanazar knew less than of most, and his friends, he says, told Dr. Mead he might as well have affirmed him to be an Ethiopian from his complexion as a German from his pronunciation.

With another critic Psalmanazar himself dealt neatly. This was Bishop Burnet, who interrupted him once when he was talking of Formosa : " Aye, so you say ; but what proof can you give that you are not of China, Japan, or any other country ? " " The manner of my flight," answered Psalmanazar, " did not allow me to bring credentials. But suppose your Lordship were at Formosa and should say you were an Englishman, might not the Formosan as justly reply, ' You say you are an Englishman, but what proof can you give that you are not of any other country, for you look as like a Dutchman as any that ever traded to Formosa ? ' " His lordship was silenced.

Psalmanazar says that his friends, whom his plain dress and diet, his avoidance of drink and women, the warmth of his religious feeling and his delight in the services of the Church convinced of his sincerity, were angry at the suggestion that he was an impostor ; and some even went so far as to challenge his accusers, by advertisements in the *London Gazette*, to prove their aspersions. Thanks to the exertions of Innes, he had been introduced to a large number of learned divines, and there can

[1] In later life he was said to speak English " with the city accent and coarsely enough " (Hawkins, *Johnson's Works*, xi., 206).

GEORGE PSALMANAZAR

*From a contemporary engraving*

[p. 212

be no doubt that he did really, as he claims, make an impression by his powers of argument on religious matters. One is naturally inclined, in dealing with a confessed fraud, to discount heavily all his statements. But there is plenty of independent evidence that Psalmanazar had a remarkable ability for religious discussion, which won for him the regard of men of the highest character, both in his youth and in his later years.

Among those with whom Innes brought him in touch were some of the non-juring clergy, and in particular the celebrated Charles Leslie, " of whose writings, as well as instructive and facetious company," he says, " I was very fond." He was much biased, he adds, by the conversation of these non-jurors to their principles, which also he found conformable to the school divinity he had learnt abroad. He was accused by some of his enemies of being a tool of the non-jurors. Others, however, looked on him as a disguised Jesuit ; while the Roman Catholics suspected him of having been bribed by the Anglicans to expose them.

Altogether he was a puzzle to the public. Before he had been three months in London he was " so cried up for a prodigy " that everyone desired to see him and converse with him. Not only the English, but the foreign papers, too, had paragraphs. He tells of a story published in the Dutch and French Press about "the young Japaner" who had so impressed the Archbishop of Canterbury by his readiness in different languages. The truth was that he only spoke to Dr. Tenison in Latin, and then, owing to a difference in pronunciations, Innes had to interpret between them.

Innes, with whom he was lodging in Pall Mall, was all the while urging him to further work on the Formosan language. First he persuaded him to put the Catechism into Formosan and present a copy of it to Bishop Compton. Then he urged him to write a history of Formosa, and got several of their friends to back him up and point out to Psalmanazar how much credit and profit he would gain from such a work. It is difficult to understand how Innes could suppose that an imposture of this character would long defy detection. But a man who could, like Innes, steal a friend's manuscript and publish it as his own must have had a

supreme belief in the power of charlatanry. He must also have had much faith in Psalmanazar's cleverness.

To help him in his task, Innes lent Psalmanazar Varenius's *Description of Japan* ; and with this and the *Account of the Island of Formosa*, by George Candidius, a Dutch minister who had resided there, Psalmanazar set to work. In two months, in spite of interruptions by visitors and invitations, he had finished the job. He was acute enough to realise that Candidius was full of absurdities, and that so little was known of Formosa that almost anything might be made to pass current about it. " I resolved with myself," he says, " to give such a description of it as should be wholly new and surprising and should in most particulars clash with all accounts other writers had given of it ; particularly that it belonged to Japan, contrary to what all writers and travellers have affirmed of its being subject to China."

When Psalmanazar had completed his work in Latin, an English translation of it was made by a Mr. Oswald, who helped him to correct the most obvious errors. Then it appeared in the early part of 1704 as *An Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa* by George Psalmanaazaar (as at this time he spelt the name), a Native of the said Island, now in London. Numerous cuts illustrated the work, which we may suppose were from designs supplied by Psalmanazar, who had some talent for drawing.

The book, which had an elaborate dedication to Bishop Compton, consisted of three distinct parts : (1) a preface in vindication of the author from the reflections of a Jesuit missionary lately returned from China ; (2) an account of the author's travels, with the reasons of his conversion ; and (3) a description of Formosa.

The Jesuit referred to in the preface was a Father Fountenay (or Fontenay), who had spent eighteen years in China and was now in London. Psalmanazar says that Fountenay, having heard that he was publishing a book in which he spoke much against the Roman Church, and especially against the Jesuits, was so enraged that he endeavoured in all ways to destroy his credit. They were brought together at a public meeting of the Royal Society on February 2nd, and Psalmanazar claims to have had

much the better of the argument, even on the question as to whether Formosa belonged to China or Japan—wherein the Jesuit was really in the right.

A week later they both dined with Dr. Sloane, afterwards Sir Hans Sloane, secretary of the Royal Society, there being present the Prussian Minister, Lord Pembroke, and another nobleman. When the Prussian Minister asked Fountenay to whom Formosa belonged, the priest referred him to Psalmanazar! A third encounter took place at the Temple coffee-house, in the presence of several noblemen. All that happened here was that Fountenay asked Psalmanazar how he came to leave Formosa, and on hearing the tale (given in its developed form below) made no objection, except that he never knew the priest whom Psalmanazar alleged to have taken him from Formosa. Since then, says Psalmanazar, the Jesuit had aspersed him freely; but his only answer must be that of the mendicant friar to his accuser: *Mentitur impudentissime.*

In the account of his travels Psalmanazar makes Father de Rode, a Jesuit and a native of Avignon, come to Formosa in 1694 in the guise of a Japanese anxious to give lessons in Latin. Psalmanazar's father, a rich man—he is not at all unwilling for it to be inferred a "king"—of the island, engaged him to teach his son, who up to the present had been learning Greek only! So for four years de Rode lived at their house at Xternetfa, capital of Formosa, until at the end of this period he enticed the boy, now nineteen years of age, to come away with him to Europe, persuading him first to steal a large quantity of his father's gold. With this they came to Europe, arriving finally at Avignon. Here Psalmanazar made the discovery that de Rode, who had pretended to be a Japanese heathen, was a Christian. For fifteen months he continued at Avignon, constantly urged by the Jesuits with whom he was staying to be converted, and at last threatened with the Inquisition, if he held out. Just in the nick of time he escaped; and a very garbled account of his wanderings and his military service follows, as he is the first to admit in his *Memoirs.* At length "it pleased the good God to provide for me such a Judicious and Honest Guide as was very successful in

all things relating to my conversion." We perceive the portrait of the Rev. Alexander Innes!

A hundred pages are next devoted to the grounds of Psalmanazar's conversion, which have only a theological interest; and then comes the "Description of the Isle Formosa," by some considered the finest piece of historical and geographical fiction ever written. It is, however, too patently absurd to deserve such an estimate. It was indeed a gullible public that could swallow such stuff.

We are first given a history showing how Japan and Formosa were united under the sway of a villainous Emperor, Meryaandanoo, by origin Chinese, who had usurped the Japanese throne. Among the remarkable things that we are told about the customs of the country is that 18,000[1] boys under nine years of age are annually sacrificed to the supreme god of Formosa; his deputies, the sun, moon, and ten stars, the governors of the world, only receiving sacrifices of beasts. To make good the wastage of boys, the men of the island take three to six or more wives, according to their estate. The well-to-do Formosans are very fair. The chapter on food is interesting on account of an omission which was afterwards rectified. The Formosans live on swine's flesh, fowls, venison, and fish, the fowls and venison being usually eaten raw. Broiled serpents are a favourite dish.

Coming to the speech of Formosa, Psalmanazar says that it is the same as Japanese, except for some difference of pronunciation. He proceeds to introduce his invented language, now elaborated since its earlier days, with an alphabet and specimen translations of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, etc. There was apparently no one in England in those days who was in a position to disprove this philological fraud. Father Fountenay had a knowledge of Chinese; but no one came forward to show that Psalmanazar's "Formosan" had no resemblance whatever to Japanese. It is indeed curious that we do not hear of a challenge on the ground of language, even after the book had been translated into French.

[1] With regard to this grotesque figure, Psalmanazar says in his *Memoirs* that he never could be prevailed upon to withdraw a statement when once he had made it, however improbable it was. He had inadvertently, in conversation, given the annual number of victims as 18,000, so he adhered to it in his book. He confesses that his "monstrosities" gave him great trouble to vindicate afterwards, both in conversation and in the second edition of his book!

Psalmanazar concludes with a fling at the Jesuit missionaries in Japan, professing to explain why they were at first so successful in making converts there and in the end failed so signally that Christianity was a forbidden religion.

It may have been noticed above that Psalmanazar represented himself as having been nineteen years of age when Father de Rode enticed him away from Formosa. He stated also that this was six years ago, which would make him twenty-five at the date of publication of his Formosa book. This agrees with the age which he gives himself in his will. Yet in his *Memoirs*, where he claims to be telling the true story of his life, he makes himself out " scarce twenty " when he yielded to the pressure of Innes and various friends to write the *Description of Formosa*. As we have already said, Psalmanazar's chronology is loose.

For this astonishing production Psalmanazar got ten guineas ; for he was never one of that class of impostors who net large sums by their deceit. He had, however, donations from the generous few to whom he presented copies of the book ; and, when it was seen that it was selling well, the publisher gave him another twelve guineas for revision, preparatory to a second edition. And now the suggested visit to Oxford was paid, at the expense of the Bishop of London and other friends. A room was assigned to him at Christ Church, and " a very worthy and learned tutor " was provided for him, whose lectures he attended on philosophy, logic, poetry, and more especially divinity. He was also allowed access to both public and private libraries.

The account which he gives of his life at Oxford, which lasted about six months, is amusing. He did little work except the revision of his Formosa book and the preparation of his answer to the critics. But he made a great show of work. His evenings, up to nine o'clock, he usually spent in some select company, " but without drinking to excess or even to a degree of exhilaration." At nine he would retire to his room and light a candle, which he burnt for the greater part of the night, to make his neighbours think he was studying. He would often sleep in an easy chair for a whole week, not using his bed, to the great surprise of his bed-maker. He pretended to have, through overwork, " a

gouty kind of distemper," and walked lame, until his friends entreated him to have regular hours and proper rest. In his spare time he was most attracted by church music ; but he was " not a little ashamed to see what drunken, idle ragamuffins composed almost every choir, and with what indolence they usually performed their parts."

He claims to have found in Oxford, as in London, a great controversy raging over him. His friends, he says, were men of the best character for candour and probity. For this reason he does not name them, their partiality for him being the mere effect of too extensive a charity ! This, of course, is from the *Memoirs*, where his attitude is that of the repentant sinner.

A contemporary note on Psalmanazar at Oxford, though it was not published until after his death, shows that he did really attract considerable attention there. It is dated June 1704, being written after an interview with " the famous Formosan," in the presence of several gentlemen and ladies, to whom he gave a fuller account of the diabolical sacrifices of Formosa than was contained in his book. " What became of the bodies of the victims ? " asked the writer of the note. " The priests might eat them," replied Psalmanazar. So vast a number (18,000) drawn out every year, it was objected, was enough to unpeople a country. " Yes, with you ; but in my country the poorest men have two or three and the nobles twelve or fifteen wives each."

In Formosa, Psalmanazar declared, they had an absolute power over their women, and when they grew weary of them they had but to say they suspected them of adultery, and without more ceremony they cut off their heads and ate them. " Barbarous ! " exclaimed a shocked lady among his listeners. Barbarous to accuse them wrongfully, he admitted ; and he wished the custom were abolished. But as to eating the bodies, it was another matter. " I think it no sin to eat human flesh ; but I must own it is a little unmannerly." He had once eaten part of a black slave—they had some African slaves in Formosa—and found him tough and unsavoury.

Psalmanazar went on with his preposterous tales. His

grandfather had lived to one hundred and seventeen, keeping his vigour by sucking the blood of a viper every morning, and had only died so young because they were forced to kill him. He had a violent colic, he explained, and it was the custom in Formosa to put people out of their pain. One of his mothers (*sic*) smoked six ounces of tobacco a day, in a pipe whose bowl held an ounce and whose shank was some yards in length. The Formosans carried bosom-snakes, which twined themselves several times round their owners' waists, and were loving, grateful and faithful, protecting their owners better than mastiffs, and keeping them cool when travelling. He was at a great loss for one of these " sweet beasts," English snakes being useless.

After all this weird nonsense, Psalmanazar spoke of his resolve to return to Formosa, and his certainty that his father was a man of such good sense that he would be able to convince him, and others with him, of the truth of Christianity. When reminded of the hazards of missionary work, he replied that if it were his fate to suffer for his religion he could not die in a better cause.

The writer of the note from which we have been quoting is impressed by Psalmanazar's attitude, as he is also by his supposed mastery of six languages, his acute apprehension and tenacious memory, and his power of religious argument. As to who he actually is, he says : " Psalmanazar is thought to be a fictitious name, which he has chosen for a disguise, and seems ground for belief to what the Jesuits (who kidnapped him from his father) gave out, *viz.* that he was a king's son. Certain it is, he makes no brags of his family, and is not very easy in being examined much about it."

In appearance Psalmanazar is by this writer described as a middle-sized, well-shaped man, of a fair complexion—like all the inhabitants of Formosa ! A singular habit of his is mentioned. He carries the bowl of a pipe in his pocket, with a shank one inch and a half long. Though it is of ordinary clay, the bowl is black throughout like jet. This, though he does not smoke it, " relishes his mouth " in company where smoking would be thought indecent. Also, when his pockets are low, he can with

a live coal give himself the satisfaction of his beloved odour without expense.

For one who boasted that his mother smoked six ounces of tobacco a day this satisfaction sounds rather meagre.

. . . . . .

His six months at Oxford having come to an end—without us hearing any more of the scheme to train missionaries for Formosa—Psalmanazar returned to London and went to his old lodgings in Pall Mall. Here to his annoyance he found that Innes had left, having obtained, in recognition of his conversion of the young Formosan, the post of chaplain-general to the British forces in Portugal. His annoyance was due to the loss of Innes's assistance in keeping up his imposture, not to the loss of Innes's company. At this point in his *Memoirs* he stops to charge Innes with " an almost insurmountable propensity to wine and women," of which he has made no mention before. He had been guilty, he says, of such notorious and barefaced immoralities, both in the Pall Mall house and in previous lodgings in the Strand, that his reputation had greatly suffered. He had been turned out of the Strand lodgings, and would have suffered a similar fate in Pall Mall, had he not gone away in time.

With such debauchery Psalmanazar contrasts his own conduct. It is very curious, however, how anxious he is lest his readers should think he could not win favour in women's eyes. On the contrary, he says that with many of the fair sex he was a great favourite and that, if he could have overcome his natural sheepishness and fear of repulse, he might have been more successful, " either by way of matrimony or intrigue." In a few instances of the unlawful kind, he continues, and especially in one where his affection was captivated to an immoderate degree, no man pursued more eagerly than he. But he would mention no names. There must have been some secret providence which kept him from giving way as he might otherwise have done, to the ruin of his health, circumstances, etc. He was not a Don Juan, he seems to say, but he could have been, save for the grace of God.

The second edition of the *Description of Formosa* has a " second

preface," dated June 12th, 1705. Here, in thirty-four pages, Psalmanazar deals with the objections made against various statements in the first edition, and attempts, with more or less plausibility, to answer them. The trouble caused him by his "monstrosities," as he later called them, is obvious. But he will not admit more than inaccuracies due to his age when he left Formosa and the lapse of time since then. Of his good faith he will allow no question. After these objections and answers he alludes to a meeting which he had about a year previously with "the excellent Captain Halley"—Edmund Halley, the famous scientist, he means—and some other gentlemen at a tavern. This interview, though he does not refer to it in his *Memoirs*, must have occasioned some stir. He now denies that he was detected in falsehood by Halley.

Halley, it appears, enquired how long the sun shone directly down the chimneys in Formosa every year. His answer, he says, was that the chimneys in Formosa were crooked pipes, turned up at the ends, so that though the island was exactly under the line, the Tropic of Cancer, the sun could never shine down the chimneys. Another of Halley's questions was as to the duration of twilight in Formosa. Psalmanazar says that, having then very little English, he had not understood the question. When it was explained to him, he had replied that he had never made any observation of twilight, for until he came to Europe he "never heard of a distinguish'd time from Day and Night." We feel that Halley's account of this interview would have been rather different.

In this new preface Psalmanazar complains of the inaccuracy of a French translation, which had appeared of his first edition, by "le Sieur N. F. B. R."[1] This was doubtless with a view to guarding himself against the complaints of d'Amalvi, which as a matter of fact were duly expressed in a book of *Eclaircissements* in 1706, provoking, as we shall see, a rejoinder from Psalmanazar.

The *Description of Formosa* contains considerably more matter

[1] More fully, as Psalmanazar gives it in his *Answer* to d'Amalvi, "S. N. F. D. B. R.," or "Sieur Nicholas Francois Du Bois Refugie"—we retain the name exactly as he spells it. We have no clue to the translator's identity.

in the second edition than it had in the first. True to his principle of never retracting what he had said, Psalmanazar embodied in it the substance of his conversations since the first edition appeared. A notable example of this is in the chapter, "of the Things that we commonly eat." In the first edition he had said nothing of the consumption of human flesh. We know that he had spoken of this at Oxford; and he may have done so in London also. Now he writes: "We also eat humane Flesh, which I am now convinc'd is a very barbarous custom, though we feed only upon our open Enemies, slain or made captive in the Field, or else upon Malefactors legally executed." (He does not explain in which category the Formosans put the repudiated wives about whom he had talked at Oxford!) Some grisly details about cannibalism follow.

With regard to food in general, he felt it necessary to strengthen what he had said previously, to support his own pose of taking it uncooked. "We generally eat all sorts of unforbidden Flesh raw; now and then (but very rarely) you shall see a Man put his Meat into boiling Water to cleanse and just warm it." Or he might toast it before the fire, to take away its "wateriness." But in either case he ate it cold.

In the second edition the account of the author's travels and his conversion is transferred to the end of the book, and a copy is appended of the no doubt genuine letter of recommendation given to Psalmanazar before his departure from Sluys.

After the appearance of the second edition of the *Description of Formosa* Psalmanazar's literary activity slackened. In this respect the disappearance of his evil genius, Innes, was very decidedly felt by him. He wanted a spur to make him work, and at present he could not produce this spur from within. It is not until 1707 that we get his next acknowledged publication. This is a treatise entitled *A Dialogue between a Japonese and a Formosan about some points of religion.* In this dialogue, which he professes to have heard before he left Formosa, the "Japonese" champions the cause of free thought, the Formosan that of priestcraft. In his prefatory remarks he says that his chief purpose in publishing the work is to "vindicate the Japoneses

from that unjust Character this part of the World is pleased to give them, *viz.* of being a people much given to Superstition." It does not appear that this *Dialogue* created any stir.

Subsequent to the *Dialogue*, but bearing no date, there appeared, with the imprint of the same publisher, Bernard Lintott, of Fleet Street, two pamplets which show that the attacks on Psalmanazar's credit continued vigorously. One was entitled *An Enquiry into the Objections against George Psalmanaazaar* and was anonymous. It was, however, obviously inspired by Psalmanazar himself, and was dedicated to Bishop Compton, who probably contributed to the expense of publication. The writers—for they speak of themselves in the plural—call themselves " no schollars " and apologise for their want of eloquence ; but they exhibit considerable ingenuity in defending a bad case.

Psalmanazar had been endeavouring to get over the discrepancies between his and other accounts of Formosa by explaining that there were two islands, Tayavan[1] and Pak-ando, the latter being that which he had spoken of as Formosa. So the *Enquiry* has as frontispiece a map " brought from the East Indies by Capt. Bowery, author of the Mallayo Grammar and Dictionary," which shows the islands as separate. The awkward fact that Psalmanazar's " Formosan " version of the Lord's Prayer did not at all correspond with one in a book giving that prayer in a hundred languages is met by the explanation that the speech of the coast people and the other inhabitants of Formosa differs.

A very curious feature of the book is the reproduction of a letter, in French, which seems to support the story of a native of the Far East having been at the Jesuit convent in Avignon. There had been talk of letters from Avignon, denying Psalmanazar's account of how he had stayed with the Jesuits there. Very likely there had been such letters ; but that which was now put forward professed to be from the pen of a " Reverend Author," who, being at Orange about five years before he wrote the letter, heard of a Chinese lately arrived in Avignon. He tried to get a

[1] *Se.*, Tai-wan, the Chinese name for Formosa.

friend to bring him to Orange, but learnt that he had disappeared. Two years later the writer came to London and there met the Chinese, who turned out, however, to be a " Japponese " from Formosa. By conversation with him he ascertained that he had undoubtedly been at Avignon. But, as to the existence of a Father de Rode, the Jesuits of Avignon declared that, of two priests of that name, one had died in Persia twenty years previously, while the other had never left Avignon in his life.

The actual letter, said the writers of the *Enquiry*, could be seen at the bookseller's office. So we must suppose it to have had a real existence. Was it then a skilful forgery, supporting Psalmanazar's story in part, appearing to have been written by an impartial person? This seems the only possible hypothesis, for there is no trace of foundation for the tale of a Chinese or Japanese residing with the Jesuits at Avignon. If the letter was forged, it can only have been Psalmanazar's handiwork. His sole accomplice in deceit, Innes, had deserted him.

After maintaining Psalmanazar's Japanese origin, in spite of his light colouring, and his " Japanese soul,"[1] the *Enquiry* winds up with an attack on the Jesuits, who alone are the cause of his having been suspected of imposture. They are even the authors of the report that he is really a disguised Jesuit, which they have spread in order to ruin him!

Simultaneously with this work was published Psalmanazar's reply to d'Amalvi's attack on his account of his conversion at Sluys. To it he gave the name of *L'Eclercisseur Eclercy; or an Answer to a Book entituled Eclercissements*. He disputes with d'Amalvi not only upon the facts of his conversion and baptism, but also on the doctrine of predestination and other religious topics, and concludes with an eulogy on the Church of England, but for d'Amalvi's reflections on which he would not have troubled to answer his book.

With his reply to the Walloon minister at Sluys Psalmanazar seems to have ended his writings in the character of the interesting

[1] " Such a ready Apprehension, such an Accuracy in guiding his Judgment; such a constant adhering to what he judges right; such Contempt of the World, and all its Promises and Threats, when they interpose and would byass his Judgment, are indeed to be found in Japan common enough, even natural to the Inhabitants of that Empire."

Formosan convert to Christianity. He did not yet abandon the pose; but it became increasingly difficult for him to keep it up. The disbelief of the men of science spread, and Psalmanazar's adherents grew fewer. In his *Memoirs* he prefers not to devote attention to these years. The fatal weapon of ridicule was turned against him, and at last, in the *Spectator* of March 16th, 1711, appeared the following "Advertisement":

> "On the first of April will be performed at the Play-house in the Haymarket an opera call'd *The Cruelty of Atreus*. N.B. The Scene wherein Thyestes eats his own children is to be performed by the celebrated Mr. Psalmanazar lately arrived from Formosa: The whole Supper being set to Kettle-drums."

## III

After having glossed over, or rather ignored entirely, a period in his career in which he had not even the satisfaction of being able to draw himself as the successful impostor, Psalmanazar comes back to details in his *Memoirs* at a point which he places about five or six years after his arrival in England, but which seems really to have been in 1712. He was, not so much through lavish expenditure as through carelessness and want of a regular competency, in very poor circumstances, when one Pattenden came to him with a proposal. This man had invented "a white sort of Japan," which he had been in vain trying to recommend to the world. It occurred to him that Psalmanazar, even though discredited in so many people's eyes, might yet be able to help him. If he would father the ware, and say that he had brought the secret of it from Formosa, and would also put a hand now and then to the painting, Pattenden offered him a considerable share in the profits.

Psalmanazar agreed, and accordingly they advertised their White Formosan Work and put it on the market. It was much admired; but Pattenden, against his advice, Psalmanazar

says, insisted on "a vast high price," and the plan to make a fortune miscarried.

More honest attempts at a livelihood followed, but still not such as to commend themselves to Psalmanazar when he had found grace. First he practised "a kind of empirical physic," and then he gave lessons in some modern languages with which he was imperfectly acquainted. He made very little money either way. An offer from a counsellor at Lincoln's Inn to teach his sons Latin and other subjects brought him rather better pay for a year; and a similar post, but worse paid, enabled him to tide over another year. It was now 1715, and Psalmanazar's friends exerted themselves to find him some more remunerative work. The major of a regiment of dragoons engaged in suppressing the Jacobite rising in the North of England wanted a clerk for the regiment and was persuaded to engage Psalmanazar. This major was, as Psalmanazar testifies, a generous-hearted man, who supplemented his regimental pay from his own pocket and also introduced him into the society of his fellow-officers. We need not doubt that Psalmanazar, who, after all, was a cultured and versatile man, was received, with the officers, by the clergy and gentry—and the ladies, he is careful to record—of Lancashire, where the regiment's duties lay.

Psalmanazar here tells a curious tale. The major, he says, having often heard him called by the nickname of "Sir George,"[1] used himself to call him so, and even gave out that Psalmanazar had been knighted by the late Queen Anne. At first, Psalmanazar denied this; but later, he says, he laid stronger claim to the title on account of his birth and family—as a prince of Formosa, it is to be presumed!

After the rising had been crushed, the regiment continued on garrison duty in Lancashire. Psalmanazar admits that he ought to have left it, as he was of no service now and was a drain on his friend's pocket. But he waited until it went to Bristol, on its way to Ireland, and then, after over two years, he left.

He was, no doubt, reluctant to return to the precarious life

[1] "In some of the families where he had become acquainted with me after the Peace of Utrecht," he adds, which seems to mean that Psalmanazar and the major were previously acquainted.

which he had been leading since his pretensions had been so damaged by ridicule. However, he had no option. He made another of his abrupt changes of occupation. Having a little smattering, he says, of drawing and painting, and "a strong genius" for it, he took up a branch of art which seemed to offer him some scope, namely, fan-painting. He failed to make a living at this. But through it he became acquainted with a worthy clergyman, who still believed in the Formosan story and thought he should be better employed, for instance, in the study of divinity. Accordingly he raised a subscription among other believers; and thus a sum of between £20 and £30 a year was raised to enable Psalmanazar to pursue his studies. By taking also a private pupil he had a comfortable competency.

Nevertheless, this subscription-list weighed heavy on his conscience; and, what was worse, at the houses of the subscribers he would now and then meet people who showed that they had not the same charitable opinion of him as his hosts. What if they should succeed in getting the subscriptions withdrawn? His longing for an honest livelihood grew strong.

At length he made the acquaintance of a well-to-do and kind-hearted printer, who gave him translation-work to do. From this he progressed to original work, though it does not seem possible to trace what he produced at this period. He also studied Hebrew and the Bible. It is sad to read, however, that he "still misspent a great deal of his time in a loose, careless manner, and it was not till after a year or two that he disengaged himself from company, especially of the fair sex, though, one person excepted, rather trifling than culpable, to follow his books more closely." The learned and pious persons of his acquaintance never suspected him of idle and scandalous living; and their continued trust in him was most embarrassing. They persisted in bringing up the subject of Formosa, of which he was heartily sick. But, should he admit the imposture, "what a deadly wound must have such an unsuspected confession given to my natural vanity? and what a mortification would it have been to such sincere honest people to hear it from my own mouth?"

Owing to the vague and inconsistent chronology of the *Memoirs*, it is impossible to make out exactly when Psalmanazar's reformation took place. In one place he speaks as if his thirty-second year were the turning-point of his life. But this is obviously much too early. If he was born in 1680, his thirty-second year fell in 1712, when he was engaged in the fraud with Pattenden. Even if we accepted his statement as to his age when he wrote the *Description of Formosa* as "scarce twenty," his thirty-second year would fall too soon. The tangible proof of his repentance was the first sheet of his *Memoirs*, to which he set his pen in 1728. The progress toward this point may have taken, no doubt did take, years.

Psalmanazar's own story as to how he was set on the right path is that, in his "horrible dilemma," a worthy clergyman at Braintree, Essex, came to his rescue by presenting him with a book called *Reformed Devotions*, recommended by the late Rev. Dr. Hicks. This had a great effect upon him, reconciling him to the solitude and retirement from which he had hitherto been so averse. Two other works from which he derived much help were the late pious Mr. Nelson's *Method of Devotion* and, still more, the learned and pious Mr. Law's *Serious Call to Devotion*. At the same time he was prosecuting his study of the Bible, whereon he made "a pretty collection of criticisms and observations," and seriously attempting to master Hebrew by a new method, of which he has much to say in the *Memoirs*. As the fruit of his studies, he began to prepare for the press a new edition of the Psalms; but, when he took it to Samuel Palmer (who, though he afterwards fell on evil days, seems to have been the "well-to-do and kind-hearted printer" mentioned above), he found that he had been anticipated by Dr. Hare, Bishop of Chichester. He therefore abandoned the idea of publishing this work.

We get now a gap in the story until early in 1728 illness overtook Psalmanazar; the only illness, except his last, which he mentions in the course of what was evidently a very healthy life. It was, he says, "a lingering every-other-day ague," and it lasted about six weeks. He was at the time at a friend's house

in the country, " a sweet place of retreat." Here the struggle which had been going on in his mind reached its culminating point. At length, hurried in some measure, as he admits, by his illness, he decided upon a public acknowledgment of what he calls in the Preface to his *Memoirs* " one of the vilest and most odious impostures that youth and rashness could be guilty of." He began to write the *Memoirs*, and continued without interruption until he reached the point where he came to England. As on p. 70 of the first edition of the book he gives the date as April 22nd, 1728, we are able to fix with some precision the period of his illness, which is also the first milestone on the long road to his death in 1763, during which time his conduct was universally admitted to be exemplary. The only failing which remained from his unregenerate days was, as we shall hear, the taking of laudanum.

When he had thrown off his illness, Psalmanazar returned to London, where through pressure of work he did not find it easy to carry on the story of his life. At first he set aside one hour every Wednesday and Friday to it; but even this proved impossible later, and he wrote less regularly. As much might be gathered from the more desultory character of the *Memoirs* after the earlier years have been dealt with.

The writer of the article upon Psalmanazar in the *Nouvelle Biographie Générale* remarks that Psalmanazar's life after his change of heart is less interesting than before. " *La vertu, comme le bonheur, n'a point d'histoire!* " Psalmanazar himself can find little more to record in his later *Memoirs* than some details of such literary employment as he could get. The first considerable piece of work was the *General History of Printing*, which Samuel Palmer had begun, but, being unable to carry on, entrusted to Psalmanazar to finish. In 1732 Palmer died; and the Earl of Pembroke, who had taken a great interest in the book, was induced to receive Psalmanazar. Pembroke had been friendly to him when he first came to England, but had been turned against him by his absurd claim that the Formosans studied Greek. He frankly told him now why he had dropped his acquaintance, whereon Psalmanazar admitted the justice

of his lordship's attitude, and pointed out that he had long since disclaimed his "rash inconsiderate piece of youthful vanity" and taken to an honourable livelihood. Peace was made, and Pembroke generously undertook all the charges in connection with the book, which was produced the same year, with Palmer's name, however, on the title-page.

Before Palmer's death Psalmanazar had been engaged by him as contributor to his *Universal History*, in which he wrote the early history of the Jews. He continued to contribute under Palmer's successors, writing many of the subsequent articles during a period of a dozen years.

Among those with whom he was brought in contact when engaged on this historical hack-work—for it was nothing better—was Archibald Bower, another impostor with an edifying end, who, after years of double-dealing between England and Rome, was described on his tombstone at Marylebone as "a man exemplary for every social virtue." Psalmanazar's connection with Bower was purely literary. Meeting in connection with the *Universal History*, they went on to other work together. Bower brought out a *Complete System of Geography*, and to this Psalmanazar contributed, anonymously, the articles on China, Japan, and the neighbouring islands. In the article on Formosa appears Psalmanazar's first acknowledgment in print of his imposture. Hitherto his confession had been made in conversation only. Now, in 1747, he wrote with regard to his former tales:

> "Psalmanazar . . . hath long since ingenuously owned the contrary, though not in so public a manner as he might perhaps have done, had not such an avowment been likely to have affected some few persons who for private ends took advantage of his youthful vanity to encourage him in an imposture which he might otherwise never have had the thought, much less the confidence, to have carried on. These persons being now dead, and out of all danger of being hurt by it, he now gives us leave to assure the world that the greatest part of that account was fabulous."

It may be noted that Psalmanazar never hints in his *Memoirs* that anyone other than Alexander Innes was in the secret of the fraud he was committing. Elsewhere than here, his reluctance to confess is ascribed to his fear of hurting the honest people who believed in him, not any such as might have exploited him. With regard to Innes, who was alive when Psalmanazar began to write his *Memoirs*, but was now dead, it was evidently not esteem for his character which deterred Psalmanazar from speaking out earlier. It may have been appreciation of Innes's influence with some dignitaries of the Church! That influence is curious, but undeniable.

Psalmanazar was, by the ordinary reckoning, sixty-seven years of age when he first put into print his confession of fraud. He still had another sixteen years to live, during which his circumstances were modest, but the respect which he inspired was general. In *Humphrey Clinker* Smollett speaks of him as subsisting, after fifty years of literary drudgery, on the charity of a few booksellers, just sufficient to keep him from the parish. Yet, according to what Dr. Hawkesworth told Sir John Hawkins, in the neighbourhood of his own home scarce anyone, not even a child, passed him without a mark of respect. This home was, in his declining years, in Ironmonger Row, Old Street, Clerkenwell; and in Old Street were two buildings which he frequented, the parish church of St. Luke and an alehouse which has become famous because of the visits to it of Samuel Johnson.

Johnson may not have gone to this alehouse originally to see Psalmanazar. He certainly paid visits to it for the express purpose of meeting him. As he told Boswell, of all men he "sought after" Psalmanazar most. Thirty years his junior, he was immensely impressed by him. Never, he declared, had he seen the close of a life which he should so much like his own to resemble. In his *Meditations* he records as one of the two "regular" men whom he had seen "Psalmanazar, whose life was, I think, uniform." Asked once if he had ever contradicted him, he replied that he would as soon have thought of contradicting a bishop! What they talked about we are not told; but one subject was especially avoided. Had he ever mentioned Formosa

before Psalmanazar? Johnson was asked. "I was afraid to mention even China," he replied. Beyond a doubt, Johnson believed entirely in the sincerity of Psalmanazar's penitence; and we need hardly invoke in this matter Sir Joshua Reynolds's opinion that Johnson had little suspicion of hypocrisy in religion. If ever a man seemed to have made a complete break with a life of deceit, it was Psalmanazar.

A bare allusion has been made above to one failing of which he never succeeded in ridding himself—the taking of laudanum. In the Preface to his *Memoirs*, which he wrote when nearing his seventieth year, he confesses to his forty years' indulgence in the drug. Any pretence he may have made of taking it to ease gout was untrue, as he had not the least symptom of gout. His original motive was "no other than my vanity and senseless affectation of singularity." The quantity he took never came up to the great excess he had represented; but frequently, by way of ostentation, the dose was so large as must have injured a man of less strong constitution.

He became a perfect slave to the drug, until after a good many years, when he was drinking ten to twelve teaspoonfuls morning and night, he began to feel the inconvenient effects and made a fight to reduce the quantity. This was so far successful that for three weeks he went entirely without it. Low spirits and a cold winter made him then resume the habit, but only to the extent of taking ten to twelve drops a day. This quantity, for seven or eight years before he wrote the Preface, he would take every night in a small punch, as soon as he had finished writing.

The method in which he had drunk the laudanum in his earlier, unregenerate days was with some acid, such as the juice of Seville oranges, mixed with some alkalis. This he appears to have invented himself, and he claimed at first that it rendered opium inoffensive, indeed beneficial. Later he admitted that not to be true, though he thought his preparation of the drug to be better than other people's, such as the well-known Dr. Sydenham's.

Laudanum was Psalmanazar's only indulgence in the realm of drink or food. Apart from the aforesaid small punch in which

he took it, he drank nothing but tea. His diet in his later years—after he had abandoned his "Formosan" raw flesh—was of the plainest at noon, and his supper was light. Thanks to his regimen, he enjoyed good health, and was able for many years to work from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., with a good digestion, a clear head, and a "tolerable flow of spirits," while at night he had six or seven hours' sound sleep.

The Preface from which we have been quoting is a fair testimony to the vigour of mind of a man nearing seventy. It covers over fifty pages of print. After describing why and how he wrote his *Memoirs*, Psalmanazar devotes most of his space to religious matters, and particularly to the question of his own attitude toward the Churches of England and Rome. This attitude, he says, was unfixed until he read a book by the Rev. Charles Leslie (of his admiration for whom we have already heard), which settled him. Thereafter he remained in steady and sincere communion with the Church of England, to which he gives the preference over all others. Nevertheless he is glad to be a layman only; for some of the injunctions which the Church lays on her clergy are such as he could by no means submit to, and he believes that the most conscientious of the clergy would be glad to be freed from them. Of episcopacy, however, he highly approves.

In the course of this exposition of his views Psalmanazar introduces what is really an excellent short sermon against "the uncharitable condemning spirit, which hath so long reigned among Christians of all denominations," and pleads for charity even to "our modern Free-thinkers." Having mentioned two extreme religious tenets, characteristic of Churches with whose representatives he had frequently been in conflict, he says:

> "I have chosen to instance in the doctrines of transubstantiation and predestination, as they appear the most shocking and anti-scriptural to everyone except those who believe them; nevertheless, from a sense of my fallibility, as well as of the weakness of human reason, I should be very fearful of pronouncing them absolutely false (much less to

call them anti-christian, damnable, &c.). Their appearing so to me is a sufficient reason for my declaring my dissent from them, but doth not authorize me to pronounce those that believe them to be guilty before God for so doing."

As early as 1752, Psalmanazar made his "Last Will and Testament," which was signed on April 4th; and on January 1st, 1762, "quite sound in my mind, though weak in my body," he confirmed it. The document opens with a long and humble prayer, expressing the testator's contrition and his gratitude for the mercies vouchsafed to him by God. The executrix is to be "my worthy and pious friend Sarah Rewalling, of this parish of St. Luke's, in Middlesex," who is to have all his household goods, apparel, manuscripts, and any money due to him. His principal manuscript, that of the *Memoirs*, is to be sold to the highest bidder, in order to pay arrears for his lodgings and to defray his funeral expenses. His wish is to be buried in some obscure corner of the common burying-ground, in the lowest and cheapest manner.

A year and four months after his confirmation of his will, on May 3rd, 1763, George Psalmanazar died in his house in Ironmonger Row. Of his last days we have the following note in Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*:

> "His pious and patient endurance of a tedious illness, ending in an exemplary death, confirmed the strong impression his merit had made upon the mind of Mr. Johnson, 'It is so *very* difficult (said he always) for a sick man not to be a scoundrel.'"

So far had the story of the Formosan convert faded away into the past that Psalmanazar's death practically passed unnoticed. It was not until his *Memoirs* appeared in the following year that interest in him revived, the *Gentleman's Magazine* then devoting several articles to the book. This had been published with the Preface he had written for it, and also, by desire of the executrix, his Last Will and Testament. We know

no more as to the success of the *Memoirs* than that they came out in a second edition in 1765.

The wish expressed by Psalmanazar as to his own burial seems to have been respected, for his grave is not known.

. . . . . .

Since Psalmanazar's death no fresh information of any description has come out about him ; and what we know of him is almost precisely what he wanted posterity to know. He remains a striking example, perhaps the most striking in history, of a man whose life is cut into two portions entirely distinct from one another. We might be tempted to think that his was a case of dual personality, were it not for the carrying over of the conscious memory from one life-portion to the other, which does not seem to accompany the phenomenon of dual personality. For want of any other plausible explanation we are driven to accept Psalmanazar's own, that through a complete change of heart a youth of constant fraud and lies gave place to a manhood and old age of such sobriety and virtue that reproach was silent.

Note.—A curious modern parallel, in some respects, to Psalmanazar was "White Elk," the reputed chief of the Canadian Iroquois, who in 1924 created such a sensation in Italy. Like Psalmanazar he seems to have been of French blood, and like Psalmanazar he masqueraded as a Mongolian. Like Psalmanazar again, he was versatile, though his versatility took different forms from Psalmanazar's. He did not mix religion with his imposture ; and he pretended to enormous wealth (through the discovery of petroleum-wells on his tribal territory), whereas Psalmanazar never claimed to command money outside Formosa.

The defence of "White Elk," in the trial at Lugano, was based on the plea that he was a megalomaniac, not fully responsible for his actions. This explanation is plainly insufficient in the case of Psalmanazar.

YOUNG IRELAND: AN UNAPPRECIATED JESTER

# YOUNG IRELAND: AN UNAPPRECIATED JESTER

## I

In the article by Andrew Lang quoted at the beginning of the previous section of this book some analysis is made of the motives of literary forgers. Lang looks on the forgeries to which we are now coming as belonging to the class of "playful frauds, or frauds in their origin playful." He remarks also that in W. H. Ireland's case forgery "grew on him like dram-drinking." This appears to be not only the most charitable, but also the most plausible, explanation of a truly astonishing affair.

Malone, however, and the later castigator of Ireland, Dr. Ingleby, do not take such a charitable view. Malone was not content with denouncing "the egregious fraud," in which he implicated also Ireland's father, but plainly attributed their conduct to desire for money, "avarice," which, as young Ireland in his *Confessions* indignantly protests, "never once entered his mind during the fabrication of the papers." Ingleby in a discussion of the *Confessions* says that "one object seems to have prompted the deception, *viz.* the love of money." This was, he adds, the root alike of the forgeries, of young Ireland's two books, which he wrote upon the forgeries, and of all other acts of the Ireland family.

Neither of the Irelands had the chance of replying to Ingleby; for when his attack appeared the father had been dead fifty-nine years, and the son twenty-four. Whether the bitterness of that attack was justified, the following pages will attempt to discover. The main issue is the credibility or otherwise of young Ireland's two works, *An Authentic Account* and the *Confessions*.

. . . . . .

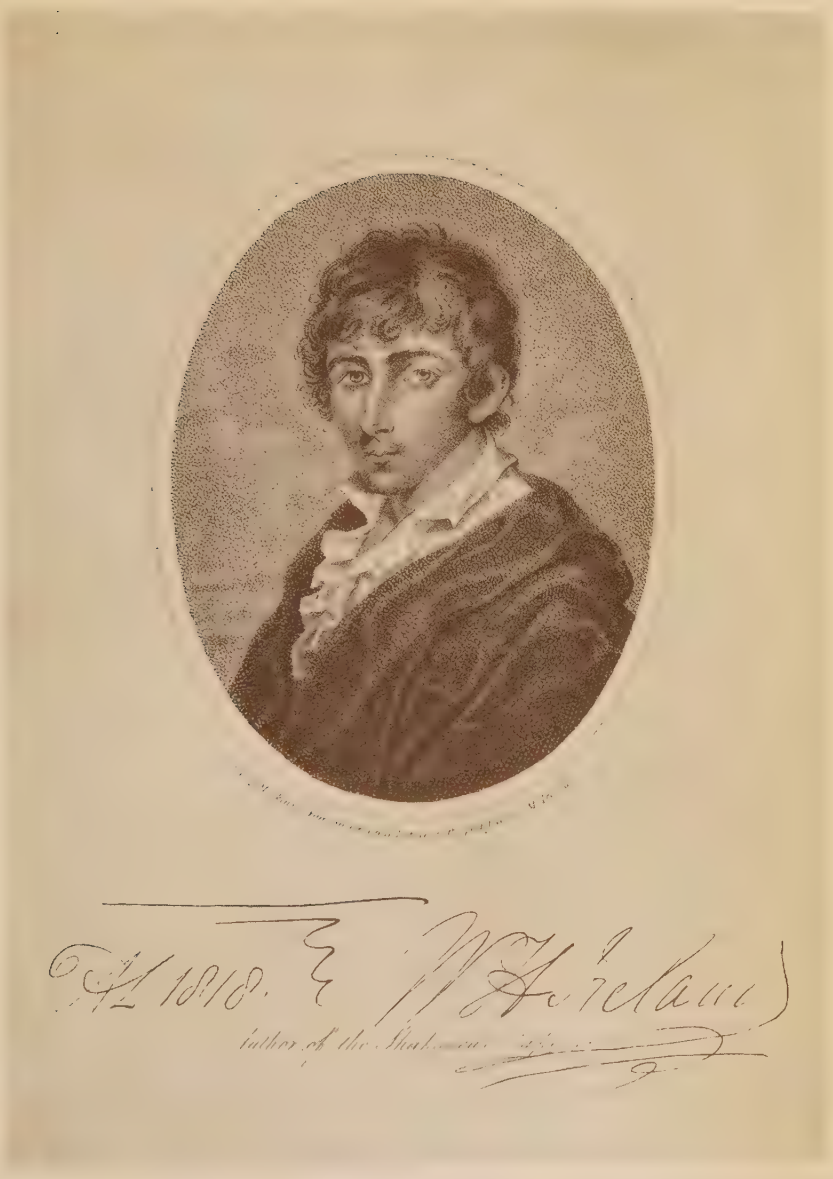
William Henry Ireland[1] was born in 1777, being the son of

[1] That he appears also under the name of "Samuel William Henry Ireland" is explained by him as due to the fact that Samuel had had an older son, named after himself, who died in childhood, after which he transferred the name to the younger son. He certainly seems habitually to have called him "Sam."

Samuel Ireland, a rather remarkable character, who converted himself from a Spitalfields weaver into a connoisseur of books and pictures, and collected a wide circle of acquaintances among the experts and the dilettantes in literature and art. Apparently self-taught, Samuel Ireland attained a sufficient amount of skill in drawing and engraving to win a medal from the Society of Arts and to exhibit at the Royal Academy a view of Oxford; and he published at various times illustrated books on English river-scenery. Of his taste in letters we know this much, that he had an unbounded admiration for Shakespeare. As to his judgment, all depends on the question whether or not he was taken in by his son's forgeries. If he was (and this is what the son maintained after his confession), then we can have but a low opinion of Samuel's critical faculties. On the other hand, if (as his enemies asserted) he was involved in the fraud himself, then his judgment is rescued—at the expense of his honour. But this is a question which may be left for the present.

Besides his son, Samuel Ireland had two daughters, Anna Maria and Jane. As to the existence of a Mrs. Ireland there is a curious doubt. Malone is the authority (though he merely says "I am informed") for the statement that the son was baptised William Henry Irwyn, "according to his mother's name, who was then a married woman living with Mr. Ireland, seperated [*sic*] from her husband." He also speaks of the baptism being registered in the parish of St. Clement Danes in the year 1777. Now Ingleby, who at first spoke very bitterly of Samuel Ireland, but afterwards repented, took the trouble to examine the baptismal register of St. Clement Danes between the years 1772 and 1779 and found no such an entry as Malone mentions. The same Ingleby speaks of Samuel's marriage to "the beautiful Anna Maria Irwin," though he is not sure of the spelling of her surname. We are therefore compelled to view Malone's statements with suspicion. We might indeed reject them unreservedly, were it not for a letter written by William Henry Ireland in the depth of his humiliation in January 1797.

We know that Samuel Ireland in 1795 had as housekeeper and secretary at Norfolk Street a lady called Mrs. Freeman,



WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND

[p. 240

whom some speak of also as Mrs. Irwin, or Irwyn. Commonly she is known as the children's aunt, and it might reasonably be supposed that Samuel was a widower, who had taken his married sister-in-law—possibly separated from her husband—into his house to look after his domestic affairs. But this is what his son writes to him in the letter of January 1797:

"As various opinions seem to agitate the public Mind . . . which would tend to frustrate any attempts I might make of appearing on the Stage, and not knowing what step it is most expedient that I should take as to my future Welfare—I apply, Sir, to you, not for *pecuniary aid*, but advice, and perhaps assistance of another kind.

"If you are *really* my Father, I appeal to your feelings as a Parent. If not, I am the more indebted to you for your Care of my youthful Education &c. And, though I cannot expect so much, yet I shall hope from you that degree of feeling due to every Man from a fellow Creature.—I have said, If you are my parent, being at a loss to account for the Expression so often said to Mrs. Freeman, and which she has repeatedly told me of, 'that you did not think me *your Son*.' Besides, after slight altercations with Mrs. F—— you have frequently said that when of age you had a story to tell me which would astonish and (if I mistake not) much shock me. Mrs. F—— after my bringing forward the papers us'd ironically to say 'that now you was glad enough to own me for your Son.' If, my Dr. Sir, you know any thing relating to myself, I intreat you to inform me of it. But should it be mearly a Story relating to my *Mother* which might give me pain, I trust you will bury it in oblivion, nay I am sure you will, for Delicacy, I am well convinc'd, is no Stranger to your Bosom." . . .

The letter of which this forms the opening is signed "Yours ever, W. H. Ireland"; though in a letter three weeks earlier he had erased the "W. H. Ireland" and substituted "W. H. Freeman." Three months after the above letter he signs himself "Yours affectionately, W. H. Ireland." Need we attach much

importance to the ebullition of spleen which resulted in the two earlier letters? Never in print did he give the slightest indication that he considered anyone but Samuel Ireland to be his father. Nor did Samuel, in the mass of letters and papers of his still surviving in the British Museum, as much as hint at a doubt about William Henry's paternity. As for Mrs. Freeman, she appears from her letters to have been an educated woman, of most respectable sentiments. After the departure of William Henry from home, she certainly does not write of him in a motherly way—rather stepmotherly, it might be said. It does not seem fair, on the strength of Malone's malicious note, to besmirch the lady's character. Mr. Ireland may have made unconsidered remarks in his anger, and after the " slight altercations " at home. It is not an uncommon feature in family life.

In his *Confessions* William Henry Ireland gives a slight account of his childhood, without any hint of domestic unhappiness. Born in London, he first went to a school kept by a Mr. Harvest at the back of Kensington Square, where he learnt the rudiments. Next he went to Mr. Shury's academy at Ealing; but Shury found him so backward that he sent him home at the end of the first term with a letter describing him as a disgrace to the school, whom he would rather not have back after the holidays. A year followed at Dr. Barrow's academy in Soho Square; but William Henry has no more to say in connection with this than that he was of a weakly constitution and town air disagreed with him, so that it was decided he must go to a country school.

Apart from his schools, Ireland only mentions one other side of his early days; and that is a fondness for theatricals, due perhaps, he says, to a friendship between his father and the family of Thomas Linley, one of the proprietors of Drury Lane. Once at the house of Linley's son-in-law, Sheridan, in Bruton Street, the little Ireland took part in a performance, before " a large party of the nobility," of *The Gentle Shepherd* and *Bon Ton*, both acted entirely by young persons. At this time, he says, he was fond of the pasteboard theatre, and averse from study and application.

After his year in Soho Square it was decided to send William Henry to France; and there he remained for about four years, first at Amiens, then at Eu (Normandy), and lastly visiting Paris, etc. This was the most profitable part of his education, for at least he acquired a good knowledge of French before his father came over to bring him back to London.

Samuel Ireland was now living at 8 Norfolk Street, Strand, with Mrs. Freeman and his daughter Jane, the other daughter having become Mrs. Barnard. He dealt in books, pictures, and curios at his Norfolk Street address. But he decided to apprentice his son to a Mr. Bingley, a conveyancer in chancery, at whose chambers in New Inn William Henry worked in the day (from 10 to 3 and from 5 to 8, he says), coming home to Norfolk Street at night. Here his father would often read aloud to the family some play of Shakespeare, declaring repeatedly his veneration for the Bard (as we may be sure he very frequently called him) and asserting that "there was no divine attribute which Shakespeare did not possess." Brought up in this atmosphere, William Henry did not, like some sons, experience a reaction against his father's hero-worship. He became as fervent a worshipper himself.

In another respect the father's pattern was followed by the son, and that was in his passion for the antique and curious. William Henry early began collecting; and he claims to have soon been fortunate enough to get hold of some rare tracts and other treasures of the collector. Antiquity took a hold upon him, and he tried his hand at verses in imitation of Chaucer, of which he prints a feeble example in his *Confessions*.

One evening at his father's there happened something which had a strange and unfortunate effect upon William Henry's mind. He was about seventeen years old, and steeped in romantic ideas about the past, especially, he tells us, the days of chivalry and of fine armour. This evening his father, instead of reading Shakespeare, took that extraordinary book *Love and Madness*, by Herbert (not long afterwards Sir Herbert) Croft and read part of it to his family. In *Love and Madness* Croft purports to give the correspondence between the Rev. James Hackman and the

beautiful Martha Ray, mistress of the Earl of Sandwich. Hackman had shot and killed Miss Ray, with whom he was infatuated, as she left Covent Garden on April 7th, 1779, a crime which occasioned a considerable stir at the time.

Whether Croft obtained possession of any genuine letters of these two unfortunates is uncertain. The bulk of the correspondence seems to be an imaginative exercise in the language of passion—though not abandoned passion, be it said, nor such as to exclude the expression of high sentiments. But into the midst of the alleged Hackman-Ray correspondence Croft introduces bodily a long account of the career of Thomas Chatterton, the boy genius and forger, embellished with some undoubtedly genuine letters of Chatterton's. As an excuse for this interpolation Croft makes Hackman anxious to gratify Miss Ray's desire to hear something about Chatterton; but the fact was that Croft had borrowed the letters from Chatterton's mother and sister and wanted the credit of first publishing them. Southey, many years after the appearance of *Love and Madness*, made a strong attack upon Croft in the *Monthly Magazine*, charging him with getting hold of the Chatterton letters by false pretences, keeping them for twenty-one years, and paying Chatterton's mother and sister very little out of the large profits he himself made through the inclusion of the letters in his book.

When Samuel Ireland had finished reading from *Love and Madness*, the conversation at Norfolk Street turned upon Chatterton; and from that evening William Henry conceived a great admiration for the brilliant and hapless boy. He does not say that this had anything to do with his taking to the practice of literary forgery; but it is impossible to avoid the inference, more especially as he copied his sham-antique spelling from the *Rowley Poems*. It can only be a little after the reading from *Love and Madness*, and the talk about Chatterton, that William Henry Ireland produced his earliest fake.

This first step to Avernus was a rather hesitating one. In the course of his collecting, the boy picked up, apparently about April 1794, a small quarto tract, written by a gentleman of Lincoln's Inn and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. This was

illuminated and bound in vellum, with the Queen's arms stamped in gold upon the cover. It seemed, therefore, to have been once in her library ; and he determined to try to make a " presentation copy " out of it by means of a dedicatory letter from the author to the Queen. He had some old paper in the office, and he watered down the ordinary ink to make it pale. But the appearance of his manuscript was too modern for his taste. On his way home he called at the shop in New Inn Passage of one Laurie, a bookbinder whom he knew. He showed Laurie his manuscript and told him frankly what he had done. Laurie said that the letter might deceive many people ; but one of his apprentices told the boy that he could give him something more resembling old ink, by blending some of the liquids for marbling paper.

Going back to Bingley's chambers, young Ireland rewrote the dedication, which he then took, with the book, to his father. Samuel thought the manuscript genuine and accepted it from his son, giving him in exchange a rare tract. Thus William Henry's first forgery was " planted " ; but later, when he had had more experience, he had some qualms about his handiwork and got back the dedication, in order to destroy it.

We have called this first step rather hesitating. Ireland had let Laurie into the secret of the fake, and to some extent Laurie's apprentice also. He had imposed on his father with it ; but there was no particular motive in imposing on him with this manuscript—unless it were as an experiment whether he could impose at all. Later he makes his attitude toward his father one of desire to afford him satisfaction by producing something connected with his beloved Bard. But in the forged dedication there was no connection with Shakespeare. As a joke, of course, the forgery might pass, though he never represents himself as so unfilial as to attempt to hoax his father, willing as he was to hoax others. For those who believe that the elder Ireland was privy to the whole imposture, difficulties are made easy, by rejecting William Henry's *Authentic Account* and *Confessions* alike as the works of a man who cannot be believed even when admitting to previous lies.

An important influence on the young dabbler in literary faking was exercised by a week's holiday which he took with his father in October 1794. Samuel Ireland had been commissioned to prepare a book of *Picturesque Views of the Avon*, and went down to Stratford to make his drawings, accompanied by his son. But the drawings were far from being the principal object to Samuel of his visit to the birthplace of the Bard. He made eager search after any information, any gossip, any alleged relic connected with his idol, and throughout the week Shakespeare was the one topic of conversation.

In their pilgrimage to the various sacred spots, the Irelands were joined by a minor celebrity of the neighbourhood, John Jordan, commonly known as "the Stratford poet." This man had been brought up as a carpenter, but was not contented with his trade. He not only set himself to glean all he could about Shakespeare, but also aspired to write himself. W. H. Ireland describes him as "a very honest fellow." To Dr. Ingleby, however, who speaks of him as "the Staffordshire guide," Jordan by no means appears in so favourable a light. He is "a man of low habits," whom he is inclined to suspect of being implicated in the Ireland forgeries. He was capable of forgery, he says, for he imposed upon Malone a sham vignette of the house which Shakespeare built at Stratford.

The three companions visited first an old shopkeeper, who had bought up the remains of Shakespeare's mulberry-tree, cut down many years previously by the churlish owner of New Place, to check the demands of sight-seers to view it. From this one tree, the younger Ireland remarks, the shopkeeper had produced enough mementoes for a dozen full-grown trees. Samuel bought a few.

A visit to Stratford Church followed, where the father made sketches, while the son strolled about and enjoyed the thrill of being so near the ashes of genius. Then a call was made upon Shakespeare's descendant in the female line, old Hart the butcher, who occupied the "lowly mansion" where genius had its birth. Ireland states that, when Hart died, he tried to buy the cottage; but nothing came of the negotiations.

A report came to their ears that at the time of the great fire at Stratford-on-Avon, when New Place was burnt, some of the manuscripts there had been moved to Clopton House, about a mile away. To Clopton House they repaired, to find it no longer in the hands of the Cloptons, but owned by a Mr. Williams, a gentleman farmer, well-to-do, but devoid of all refinement. When he heard what interested his visitors, he said that he wished Mr. Ireland had come a few weeks earlier, as then he could have given him a great quantity of Shakespeare's and his family's letters. But he had had some young partridges which he wished to bring up by hand, so he had turned out a small room where the papers lay, burning a large basketful of them. On many he could plainly perceive the signature of William Shakespeare! "Don't you remember it, my dear?" he asked, turning to his wife. "Yes, perfectly well," said Mrs. Williams, "and you know at the time I blamed you for destroying them." Samuel Ireland was aghast. "Good God, sir!" he cried. "You do not know what an injury the world has sustained by the loss of them!" Williams gave him permission to take away any papers that might be left; but there was no trace of any papers at all.

It is very probable that Malone is right in his surmise, in a manuscript note in his copy of Ireland's *Authentic Account*, that Williams was "a country wit, who amused himself by telling the story to ridicule Mr. Ireland."

The last visit in Shakespeare's country was to Anne Hathaway's cottage at Shottery, where Samuel Ireland was persuaded to buy a bugle purse presented by the poet to his love and an oak chair on which he had sat, with her on his knee, in courting days. With these treasures the Irelands returned to London. Often afterwards, the son says, he would see those who came to inspect the Shakespeare manuscripts at his father's house sit in the chair, listening to a reading with "settled physiognomies," and would with difficulty restrain his laughter. Clearly he had no illusions about the chair.

Returning to his work in New Inn, young Ireland found himself, by a combination of circumstances, left very much alone in Bingley's chambers. This he represents as a contributory cause

of his fall, since he had no one to watch what he did. But what tempted him to forgery was, first, his father's talk about the very few known signatures of Shakespeare ; and, secondly, " mere frolic and diversion," the idea that, " if some old writing could be produced and passed for Shakespeare's, it might occasion a little mirth and show how far credulity would go in the search for antiquities." Such, whatever we may think of it, is consistently Ireland's double excuse for his deceit : desire to please his father, and a sense of fun.

Having decided on the manufacture of a Shakespearian document, Ireland made tracings of the only known signatures, on Shakespeare's will and on the mortgage-deed of 1612, which had been printed in facsimile by George Steevens. He also took a note of the wording of that mortgage. Then, going to the office, he wrote, with the ink which Laurie's apprentice had given him, on some parchment cut off an old rent-roll, a deed purporting to be a lease between Shakespeare and John Heming, on the one hand, and Michael Fraser and his wife, on the other. He chose a deed, he says, because he had no idea how to imitate Shakespeare's handwriting other than his signature. Further, he had as guide to the language the wording of the genuine mortgage.[1] He had some difficulty in adapting old seals to his parchment ; but at length this was overcome, and Ireland's first Shakespearian forgery was ready to be introduced to the world.

When he reached home that evening—it was December 16th, 1794—the boy handed the deed to Samuel Ireland in the presence of the family, and asked his opinion of it. Samuel examined it, looked very pleased, and said he thought it was genuine, whereon his son made him a present of it. He refused any return, until Samuel positively forced him to accept a rarity from his library. But the elder Ireland was not content to rely upon his own judgment. He sent next day for Sir Frederick Eden, the well-known philanthropist, who came and gave a decided opinion that the deed was genuine. He even found corroboration in one of the

[1] Ireland says that later, when he confessed his fraud to Albany Wallis (the man, by the way, who discovered the real mortgage and made a present of it to David Garrick), the latter was astonished that, with a document so often printed as its model, experts had not detected the plagiarism in the pretended Shakespeare-Fraser deed.

old seals attached, which had a representation of a quintin on it. (This was a pure accident, William Henry explains.) Surely here was the seal of "Shake-spear," argued Sir Frederick!

Samuel Ireland spread the joyful news around, and 8 Norfolk Street became the centre of a pilgrimage. Both father and son received congratulations, and flattering suggestions that through them were likely to come further Shakespearian discoveries. William Henry, who declares that he had no intention then of producing any further forgery, was assured that the place whence the deed came would prove to be the depository of long and vainly sought for manuscripts of Shakespeare. Even his father, he says, expressed a certainty that his son knew of more to come. Thus incited, he gave way, and set to work on a more ambitious fraud —no less than William Shakespeare's *Profession of Faith*, which he made a simple and plainly Protestant document, to counteract "the bigoted profession of faith" attributed to Shakespeare's father.

With due precautions as to the paper which he used, and with especial attention to the prevalence of the "jug" watermark in Shakespeare's day, William Henry put forward the *Profession of Faith*. He wrote it, he tells, without study, committing the thoughts to paper just as they arose in his mind. This is fairly obvious, in spite of what divines of the period said about the precious document. But the most astonishing thing about the *Profession* is the spelling.[1] Young Ireland, after his study of Chatterton, had very little idea of making his spelling look old except by doubling consonants and adding e's. Anyone with a slight knowledge of Elizabethan spelling could have upset the *Profession* on that alone—unless, of course, Shakespeare spelt on a system entirely his own. But no one at first came forward to challenge the spelling, and as to the sentiments the early verdict was astonishing. Dr. Joseph Warton and Dr. Samuel Parr arrived together to inspect the manuscript. "Well, young man," observed one of them to William Henry—"the public will have just cause to admire you for the research which you

[1] The *Profession of Faith* is too long a document to quote. For examples of Ireland's pseudo-archaic spelling see pp. 252–5; and for a parody p. 258.

have made, which will afford much gratification to the literary world." "Mr. Ireland," said Warton to Samuel, "we have very fine things in our Church Service, and our Litany abounds with beauties; but here is a man has distanced us all!" For a head-master of Winchester, this was a remarkable opinion!

Young Ireland could scarce refrain from laughter—and "first began to think he had any abilities."

Naturally, however, there was questioning whence had come this *Profession of Faith*. William Henry, who had hitherto been able to put off enquirers, could no longer refuse information when he exhibited, not a deed with a signature, but an alleged holograph. He was called upon, in fact, for an explanation. With this he was ready. But we must retrace our steps a little before we come to it.

Soon after he was first articled, young Ireland made the acquaintance of a certain Montague Talbot, about three years his senior, who was also articled to a conveyancer, but who had far more inclination to the Stage, on which indeed he was destined to cut a bigger figure than he would probably have cut at the Bar. Finding him an agreeable person, he brought him to Norfolk Street and introduced him to his father; and Talbot became a frequent visitor to the house. At the time when the first forgeries were being compassed, Talbot was out of town. When he returned, he was shown the deed which William Henry had presented to his father. He had always been inclined to make fun of his young friend's antiquarian hobbies, and his facility in copying ancient handwriting—a facility which extended to modern writing, such as forged theatre-passes, insinuates Malone.

Now Talbot expressed to the boy his suspicion that he had written the deed himself. The other would not admit this at first; but one day Talbot came round to Bingley's chambers and plainly caught him in the act, so that there was nothing to be done but share the secret. When it was represented how angry Ireland's father would be if he knew, Talbot was quite willing to keep his mouth shut or back an explanation; but he rather annoyed Ireland by wanting to take a hand in the faking of

Shakespeariana. This, Ireland saw, would never do; and fortunately Talbot, having definitely abandoned the Law for the Stage, was called away from London.

Before Talbot left town, a story was composed for Ireland to tell and Talbot to confirm, if necessary. This is most concisely set out in a signed statement, which Samuel Ireland got from his son and subsequently published in his *Vindication*. Though this statement is dated November 10th, 1795, William Henry no doubt gave the gist of the story verbally some time previously. It runs:

> "I was at chambers, when Talbot called in and shewed me a deed, signed Shakespeare. I was much astonished, and mentioned the pleasure my father would receive, could he but see it. Talbot then said I might shew it. I did not for two days: and at the end of that term he gave it me. I then pressed hard to know where it was found. After two or three days had elapsed, he introduced me to the party. He was with me in the room, but took little trouble in searching. I found a second deed, and a third, and two or three loose papers. We also discovered a deed, which ascertained to the party landed property, of which he had then no knowledge. In consequence of having found this, he told us we might keep every deed, every scrap of paper relative to Shakespeare. Little was discovered in town but what was above mentioned, but the rest came from the country; owing to the papers having been removed from London many years ago.
>
> "S. W. H. IRELAND."

After getting this statement, Samuel Ireland applied to Montague Talbot for confirmation. Writing from Carmarthen on November 25th, Talbot related how he had introduced his friend to an acquaintance of his, whom he calls "Mr. H." From him the papers were acquired; but he had enjoined them never to mention him as the possessor. This made Talbot suspect that one of H.'s ancestors was a contemporary of Shakespeare in the dramatic profession; and as H. was a man somewhat

known in the world, and " in the walk of high life," he did not wish such a circumstance published! Talbot's surmise turned out to be correct, and Mr. H., it is allowed to be assumed, was a descendant of none other than John Heming. To Heming Shakespeare had bequeathed his furniture, a miniature portrait of himself, and his papers, which thus came into the possession of Mr. H.

This is not all the story, as we shall see ; but it represents the main outlines of what was told to Samuel Ireland for the benefit of all enquirers.

The taste for forgery had now certainly taken a strong hold on Samuel's son, and he was full of new ideas. The exact order of his productions is not certain. Perhaps it was before the *Profession of Faith* that he made an excursion into a different field, unconnected with Shakespeare. He came across a terra-cotta relief of Oliver Cromwell by a modern, though deceased, sculptor. At the back of this he affixed a paper, in imitated writing of the period, saying that the head had belonged to Cromwell, to whom it had been given by his friend Bradshaw. When Samuel Ireland displayed this to the experts, they declared that it must have been modelled by the celebrated old sculptor Simeon.

It was, however, to Shakespeare that young Ireland devoted the great part of his attention ; and now, having procured a fresh supply of ink from his bookbinder friend and a stock of old paper—fly-leaves from ancient folios and quartos of no value, from a shop in St. Martin's Lane—he set himself to supply the demand of the literary world for Shakespeare manuscripts. One day it was an autograph letter from the Bard to an actor friend, one Richard Cowley. The superscription to this, Ireland later admits, often " excited risibility." It ran :

" Toe Masterre Richard Cowley dwellinge atte oune Masterre Holliss a draperre inne the Wattlynge Streete Londonne."

Then there was a love-letter to Anne Hathaway—" Anna Hatherrewaye " !—with five stanzas of verse, and a lock of hair

given to Anne by Shakespeare as a token in childish days. There was a letter of gratitude from Shakespeare[1] to the Earl of Southampton, with Southampton's reply—the latter written with Ireland's left hand, to differentiate the handwritings. There were a promissory note from Shakespeare to John Heming for five guineas and Heming's receipt for the money repaid. For Heming's signature Ireland again used his left hand, and thereby nearly exposed himself.

Albany Wallis, of the firm of Wallis & Troward, solicitors, of Norfolk Street, and a friend of the Ireland family, came to Samuel and said that this signature of Heming's was quite different from Heming's known signature, at that time in his possession. William Henry, in some alarm, went round to Wallis's and examined the genuine signature. Then, saying that he must consult Mr. H., he went to Bingley's chambers and forged a signature as like as he could to that which he had just seen. He came back and explained that Mr. H. had told him that there were two John Hemings known to Shakespeare; the tall John Heming, of the Globe, and the short John Heming, of the Curtain, Theatre. He then substituted for the promissory note in his father's possession a new copy, with Heming's signature corrected. It is not easy to believe that this substitution was undetected; but then there are other points in Ireland's story which we should find it impossible to believe if we did not know them true.

A startling challenge to the credulity of the literary world was the production of a letter to Shakespeare from Queen Elizabeth. That this was accepted as genuine by anyone is certainly one of the nearly incredible parts of our story. The Queen is made to write:

> "Wee didde receive your prettye verses good Masterre William through the hands off our Lorde Chamberlayne and wee do complemente thee onne theyre great excellence. Wee shalle departe fromme Londonne toe Hampstowne forre the holydayes where wee shalle expect thee with thy beste Actorres

[1] In this Shakespeare writes that gratitude is "a Budde which Blossommes Blooms but never dyes"!

that thou mayeste playe before ourselfe toe amuse usse bee note slowe butte come to usse bye Tuesdaye nexte asse the lord Leycesterre wille be withe usse.

"ELIZABETH R."

The signature was copied from a tracing of a genuine autograph of the Queen in his father's possession ; for the body of the letter Ireland relied on his own penmanship.

After this very obvious fake (as one would suppose, to anyone with the slightest antiquarian knowledge), Ireland manufactured some playhouse receipts, two agreements between Shakespeare and two of his actors, Lowin and Condell, and then a receipt from Shakespeare to the Earl of Leicester for £50. He says that he purposely fixed this high fee for a performance before the Earl, in order to exalt Shakespeare's standing among his contemporaries. Also, coming on an old drawing in Butcher's Row one day, he touched it up so as to represent Shakespeare in the character of Bassanio. On the reverse was a representation of Shylock. He speaks with no little pride of the skilful way in which he altered these drawings.

While his son was busy with his forgeries, Samuel Ireland was reaping a harvest of fame by introducing them to learned and polite society. He had opened an exhibition of Shakespeariana at his Norfolk Street house in February 1795 ; and this continued open for over a year. In anticipation of hostile criticism he induced twenty gentlemen, including Dr. Parr, Herbert Croft, Pye the Poet Laureate, and James Boswell to sign a document solemnly attesting their belief in the authenticity of the exhibits—a step which later exposed the unhappy signatories to the bitter ridicule of Malone.

James Boswell was one of the earliest visitors to the exhibition, and there is no doubt that he was thoroughly satisfied that he saw genuine papers. Young Ireland describes how he declared his conviction, and then, having asked for and nearly drained a tumbler of warm brandy and water, rose from his chair, saying, "Well, I shall now die contented, since I have lived to witness the present day!" Kneeling down he added "I now kiss the

invaluable relics of our Bard ; and thanks to God that I have lived to see them ! "

Boswell was but one of a multitude of dupes, though the others may not have displayed their credulity in so florid a way. And so the astounding farce continued, with young Ireland daily gathering confidence and listening to suggestions as to what he might expect to find among the treasures he was unearthing. These suggestions fell on no deaf ears. If he might expect to find certain things, why should he not find them ? He decided that he would. For instance, there might be actual manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays ; and they might show divergences from the printed texts, where the Bard's original language had been distorted by the players. People had often opined that the discovery of an original manuscript would prove that the " ribaldry " attributed to the Bard was not really his. In due course Ireland came forward with a manuscript of *King Lear*, with alterations in the text where he thought the accepted lines were beneath Shakespeare ! He protests in his *Authentic Account* that it cannot be said that he injured Shakespeare's reputation by his changes. But he produces a real gem of spelling : " Thatte thou haste perrepennedycularelye felle " !

A few leaves from the manuscript of *Hamlet* followed ; but the young forger grew tired of this, in spite of the further chances which he thus had of improving upon the Bard. He had conceived the idea of " finding " a whole play, unacted and unprinted, from Shakespeare's pen. With the confidence of his eighteen years he set to work on *Vortigern*. His original inspiration was a large drawing by his father, after J. H. Mortimer, representing Rowena offering wine to Vortigern.[1] This sent him to Holinshed's *Chronicle* for the story ; and then the writing began. He

[1] W. H. Ireland says that, as the drawing hung in his father's house, it is curious that it aroused no suspicions against *Vortigern*. But Malone writes, in his copy of the *Confessions* : " This is one of the numerous falshoods in these pretended Confessions. The observation was made in the hearing of Samual Irland : the drawing was in consequence taken down and appeared no more : a decisive proof that he was a party concerned in this egregious fraud."

In *Notes and Queries* for 1857 there is a communication from William Bates, who had a copy of Ireland's *Confessions*, with manuscript notes in it by Robert Lang, of Roxburgh. Lang had been a subscriber to the father's issue of the pseudo-Shakespearian papers in facsimile ; but he said that he had not been satisfied when he saw the actual papers at Norfolk Street, " principally in consequence of remarking the singularity of the drawing of Mortimer's which hung in the room adjacent to Ireland's library."

dropped a hint to his father before he had a single line to show, in consequence of which he was, he says, unceasingly tormented for the manuscript. Now the forgery of Elizabethan writing was a work of time, and he was reduced, therefore, to bringing his father instalments in his own handwriting, alleging that he was copying the ancient script. It took him about two months to complete the work, which he seems to have done in March 1765. As *Vortigern* runs to about 2,800 words, we must allow him to have been industrious in his office hours. The quality of the production will appear later.

Ireland had thought it necessary to communicate the secret of *Vortigern* to his friend Talbot, now acting in Dublin. Talbot was loyal to his promise to support his story, but was rather hurt by not having been given full confidence before. Also he resented not having in his possession a single fragment to show people of the new Shakespeare. He wrote, however, the letter which we have already seen to Samuel Ireland, and was prepared to vouch for the finding of *Vortigern* with the other papers.

All this while the public was kept with no further information as to the source of the manuscripts, which were pouring forth and displaying their beauties at 8 Norfolk Street, than that they had been in the possession of a gentleman who insisted on remaining anonymous, or at any rate would only be known as "Mr. H." But somebody pointed out that, if a descendant of Shakespeare could be found, he might claim the papers. Young Ireland was not dismayed by this suggestion. He promptly invented a namesake and ancestor of his own, who had once saved Shakespeare from drowning and in consequence had received the papers as a bequest from the grateful Bard. A document was forthcoming to prove this, which speaks of "mye goode freynde Masterre William Henrye Irelande"; and one more forgery was swallowed by a great number of people.

When the manuscript of *Vortigern* was on view at Norfolk Street, the world, says Ireland, praised many parts of it, but said it was uneven. "Superior to the worst of Shakespeare and much inferior to his capital plays," was the general verdict—whereat William Henry smiled to think that he, at so young an

age, could imitate Shakespeare at all! But he took care, he tells, at this time to appear much in public, so as to create the impression that he was a giddy and thoughtless young man, incapable of doing what he had actually done.

It was not likely, at a time when Shakespeare stood high in theatrical managers' estimation as a draw to the public, and when the excitement over the Ireland "discoveries" showed no signs of abating, that the rumour of an entirely new Shakespeare play should leave the leading London managements unmoved. An envoy hastened to Samuel Ireland from Thomas Harris, proprietor and manager of Covent Garden. It was Wallis, father of the well-known actress of that name, afterwards Mrs. Campbell; and he was commissioned to offer any terms desired for the right to produce *Vortigern.*

The elder Ireland was flattered by Harris's offer; but he felt himself bound, by his acquaintance with Linley and Sheridan, to give Drury Lane the preference. He had several meetings with Sheridan, and at length terms were arranged. The agreement was drawn up by Albany Wallis, and young Ireland thinks that what was arranged was that Sheridan was to pay £300 down (it was £250, according to the still preserved draft agreement of July 1795), and that the profits of the first sixty (really forty) nights, less the necessary expenses of the theatre, were to be divided between Samuel Ireland, as trustee for his son, and Sheridan. Of his advance payment Samuel gave £60 to his son.

Young Ireland records some of the conversations between his father and Sheridan at their meetings. Once Samuel had been particularly lavish with his praises of Shakespeare. However high Shakespeare might stand in the estimation of the general public, replied Sheridan, he did not for his part regard him in so exalted a light as a poet. He allowed the brilliancy of his ideas and the penetration of his mind. When he first examined *Vortigern* he remarked: "There are certainly some bold ideas, but they are crude and undigested. It is very odd. One would be led to think Shakespeare must have been very young when he wrote the play." But he did not doubt its genuineness. "Who can possibly look at the papers and not believe them ancient?"

he asked. William Henry Ireland was a clever enough forger to deceive him.

The young impostor found an exalted personage rather more critical of his manuscript than Sheridan. An invitation came one day—it seems to have been before the agreement with Drury Lane had been signed—for the Irelands to call at the apartments in St. James's Palace of the Duke of Clarence and to bring the Shakespearian documents with them. They came, and found not only His Royal Highness there, but also the charming Mrs. Jordan, now in the fourth year of her connection with the Duke. Both of them put the usual questions about the original discovery of the manuscripts, which young Ireland answered with his usual tale.

The Duke, he says, made numerous objections, "and particularly to the redundancy of letters apparent throughout the papers." This Ireland himself tells in his *Confessions*; and, though the author of the *Public and Private Life of Mrs. Jordan* thinks that Ireland is romancing when he attributes to the Duke perspicuity in the matter of Elizabethan spelling, it is not necessary to imagine that. His Royal Highness may quite well have read other people's criticisms of the spelling. There were some who possessed that amount of perspicuity, and the Press did not refrain from comment. Among Samuel Ireland's papers in the British Museum is one volume devoted mainly to cuttings. One extract, undated, from the *Telegraph*, burlesques Ireland's address from Shakespeare "toe Masterre Richard Cowley," which we have seen above. The parody runs:

Elegant Address to Mr. Jarvis
by William Shakespere.

I doe respecte theee worthie Mistere Jarvisse
Andde wishe 'twasse iunc mie powere toe doe theee sarvisse.

Before the Irelands left St. James's Palace, His Royal Highness kindly gave Samuel "many cautious hints" about the *Vortigern* agreement; and both he and Mrs. Jordan exhibited curiosity as to the plot and characters of the play. Naturally Mrs. Jordan was interested; for she would have to play one of the parts at Drury Lane. She went out of her way, however, to be kind to young Ireland, received him at her private house in Somerset

Street, and, as will be seen, did all she could for him when *Vortigern* was staged for the first and last time.

On December 30th the elder Ireland called by invitation at Carlton House and showed the Shakespeare documents to the Prince of Wales, who was very affable, looked at the manuscripts, and declared that they had a strong semblance of age, though to decide upon their genuineness, he thought, would require mature reflection. Anyhow, he complimented Mr. Ireland on their introduction to the world.

It is impossible to make out from William Henry's own accounts the order in which he brought out his forgeries. But in addition to those which we have already mentioned there were numerous others of varying importance, including many books supposed to have come from Shakespeare's library, genuine Elizabethan and earlier works, with false Shakespeare autographs in them. Then there was another play, *Henry the Second*, of which the idea had come to him after he had produced *Vortigern*. In his estimation it was a more finished work ; but unfortunately he had thought of the latter first. He never wrote more of *Henry the Second* in his old script than the first three sheets. He delivered the complete play in his own handwriting, making excuses about the unwillingness of Mr. H. to let him have the rest of the original manuscript.

He was also planning other plays, in fact a whole series of "histories" from William the Conqueror to Elizabeth ; but apparently he had an idea of dropping his ascription of authorship to Shakespeare in these. In his anxiety to get into personal touch with the mysterious Mr. H., Samuel Ireland had written a letter to him, which he entrusted to his son to deliver. William Henry wrote an answer to this in a feigned hand, and took the opportunity to make Mr. H. extol him as a "brother in genius to Shakespeare"! He followed this up by sending to his father, as from Mr. H., a fragment of *William the Conqueror*.

Samuel Ireland, however, was not particularly interested in his son's avowed compositions. What he wanted was to appear as the editor of the new Shakespeariana. He pressed William Henry hard to obtain Mr. H.'s consent to the printing of the manuscripts.

At first the boy had striven to put him off, saying that Mr. H. had only given them to him as curiosities, and that he would not agree to their publication. But Samuel continued his pressure and asked why the gentleman, if he was a friend of his son, should set his face against a publication which all admitted would bring him a fortune.

His father's importunities, says William Henry, "rendered life almost insupportable." It was in vain that he suggested that the manuscripts might not, after all, be genuine. If all the men of ability then living, replied Samuel, were to swear that they had taken a share in their production, still he would not believe it. In desperation the boy thought of confessing his forgery; but he recognised that his father would be unconvinced. At last, after dinner one day, there was "some warm conversation," at the end of which he told his father that, if he was determined to publish, the only message he could give him from the gentleman was, "You do it at your own risk," as he would have no concern in the business nor allow his name to be revealed. "On those terms," exclaimed Samuel, "I very willingly accept his acquiescence." He proceeded at once to announce the forthcoming publication of "an interesting part of the works of our divine bard, Shakespeare." This was to be a folio, of which the price to subscribers would be four guineas.

This announcement was made as early as March, 1795; but publication did not take place until the end of the year, the book indeed bearing the date 1796. Bearing the title of "Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments under the hand and seal of William Shakespeare . . . from original MSS. in the possession of Samuel Ireland," this elaborate monument to human credulity includes all the Ireland forgeries, reproduced in facsimile, down to *Kynge Leare* and the fragment of *Hamblette*.[1] Neither *Vortigern* nor *Henry the Second* appears; but allusion is made to the forthcoming production of *Vortigern*.

Truly Samuel Ireland had delivered himself into his enemies' hands when he published these *Miscellaneous Papers*.

[1] Malone, in his *Inquiry*, makes great play with these spellings. He ridicules *Vortigern* in advance, "and all the Kkynges and all the Qqueenes which have been announced from the same quarter."

## II

Before we come to the eventful production of *Vortigern* we must pause to consider the question which we have hitherto avoided answering, whether Samuel Ireland was in any way implicated in his son's frauds. If he was not, then we must agree with Andrew Lang that "a more harmless and confiding old person than Samuel never collected early English tracts." This is precisely the opinion which William Henry seems to wish the world to hold about his father. It was to "afford satisfaction" to him that he forged the Shakespeare-Fraser deed, that his eyes might be pleased by the sight of at least one supposed new document connected with the Divine Bard; and he himself had at first no idea of producing further forgeries. When he was led on to fresh efforts by "vanity," by "mere frolic and diversion," by "desire for laughter," he still thought of gratifying his father. It is rather a lame story; for how, if he was fooling others, could he avoid fooling his father too? To gratify him, indeed, he must at the same time make a fool of him.

Throughout his explanation of his own attitude, however, William Henry Ireland is emphatic about his father's complete innocence. Samuel is equally, even more, emphatic, both in *Mr. Ireland's Vindication*, published in 1796, and in documents which were not printed, but are still to be seen at the British Museum. Never for a moment did he admit any guilty knowledge of the frauds. He died in 1800, still claiming to have been a dupe. It may be added that, though the relations between father and son were almost completely broken off from 1796 to 1800, the son did not take advantage of the father's removal to make any deviation from his loyalty to him. The *Confessions*, indeed, which were published as late as 1805, only amplified the earlier *Authentic Account*, giving no hint of any collaborator except the passive Montague Talbot.

The Irelands thus maintain an unbroken front as to the good faith of Samuel. He was fiercely assailed, nevertheless, before and after his death. The two most violent attacks were made by the critics whom we have had occasion to mention several times

already, Edmund Malone and Dr. C. M. Ingleby, the latter of whom was not born until after Samuel's death, and whose censures therefore could hurt his name only. But Malone could and did inflict bitter pain. This eminent, but certainly not universally loved, Shakespearian critic, devoted a book of 424 pages, including appendices, to proving that the papers in the elder Ireland's possession were "clumsy and daring frauds," the fabrications of "a bungling impostor." Of course, for Malone, this was an easy task. With plates showing the differences between the alleged and the genuine signatures and documents (of which latter he had access to many which William Henry Ireland would have had great difficulty in consulting), and with arguments based on spelling, language, and style, he demolished thoroughly the pretensions to authenticity of the new "discoveries"; and with his learning he blended agreeable humour and bitter satire.

Young Ireland might, as he did later, characterise Malone's *Inquiry* as a "very tedious epistle"—it was addressed by the author to Lord Charlemont—and laugh at the idea of upwards of 400 pages being required to prove what Malone asserted to be visible to the meanest capacity. The father might protest against Malone's pontifical attitude and his assurance that what he said about Shakespeare and his time was absolutely correct. But the *Inquiry* was damning; and what it damned was not young Ireland's forgery, about which nothing was yet known, but "Mr. Ireland's papers," and through them Mr. Ireland himself. When Malone attacked the "imposture" and the "impostor," he aimed at the elder Ireland; and to him, both at first and ever after, it was Samuel who was the arch-fraud.

Ingleby, writing, or at least publishing, his attack at the distance of twenty-four years after the son's death, had no fear of any answer on the side of the Irelands. He denounces Samuel as the original concoctor of the whole deception and the actual forger of the signatures on the various documents. He sneers at William Henry's defence of his father. "This man of scrupulous truth," he asserts, "positively trained his whole family to trade in forgery." The son was "merely amanuensis

and copier for his excellent parent." As for *Vortigern*, the elder daughter, Anna Maria (Barnard), who had gone on the stage at the persuasion of an actor-friend of the family and had failed, wrote it, with assistance from her younger sister. At the same time Ingleby describes William Henry as "his father's son," and "perhaps the most accomplished liar that ever lived." The motive of the whole Ireland family throughout was to gain money; and that motive, no feeling of repentance, inspired the *Authentic Account* and the *Confessions*, which are "tissues of lies." If the Irelands had any confederate, then it was John Jordan, of Stratford-on-Avon.

The very virulence of Ingleby's attack (and it did not stop here, as we shall see when we come to William Henry Ireland's death) rather defeats its object. But at the time when it was made it seems to have aroused no protest. One day Ingleby repented of his bitterness, and withdrew all charges against the father, while considerably modifying his language about the son. The mischief had been done, however; and, in consequence, down to very recent days Samuel Ireland's name has lain under the cloud which covers his son's.

Tardy justice was done by Sir Sidney Lee, who, in his article on the Irelands in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, showed that the two cases must be considered separately, and that the full recognition of the son's imposture does not involve a condemnation of the father. He had seen the unpublished Ireland papers in the British Museum; and whoever has seen these can hardly avoid coming to the conclusion that, however improbable it may appear from an outside study of the story, Samuel Ireland was really the simple person his son represents him to be. The indignation which he expresses, in his *Vindication* and his introductions to the published editions of *Vortigern* and *Henry the Second*, at the imputations against his honour and honesty no longer seems assumed. His distress over the way in which he had been hoaxed and his disgust with the hoaxer stand out as perfectly genuine sentiments.

The only reproach which lingers in the mind against the elder Ireland (except that of his ridiculous credulity) is that he made

money by his son's frauds, considerably more money, indeed, than his son made. Against that, of course, must be set his complete loss of reputation, his much decreased earning powers, and a bitterness of humiliation which cannot but have shortened his life. Nevertheless, it would have shown more delicacy of feeling had he declined to profit by his unconscious share in the great fraud upon the public. It would have done him more credit if, instead of cutting William Henry off with, or rather without, a shilling, he had sent him the balance of the money earned by *Vortigern*, of which he received the greater part, as trustee for his son. He retained this, perhaps looking upon it as a reparation due to him for his work in connection with the production of the play and for the injury to his name. It was tainted money, nevertheless.

. . . . . .

The production of *Vortigern* was an event eagerly looked forward to in the spring of 1796. To those who believed it to be a genuine Shakespearian work the occasion must naturally have seemed a great one. To the dubious it was at least a matter of lively curiosity. To the unbelievers the idea of the coming first night was a source of joy and of malice.

From the first there had been a strong body of opposition to the authenticity of the alleged Shakespearian discoveries. There had been an accusation of fraud in the *Morning Herald* as early as February 17th, 1795. Many of the visitors to Norfolk Street had gone away convinced that there was imposture. James Boaden, dramatist, critic, and prattling biographer, had at first thought the manuscripts genuine, but later changed his opinion and in his paper, the *Oracle*, published attacks upon them. Joseph Ritson viewed them without comment, but left Norfolk Street fully assured they were spurious, young Ireland believed.

The bitterest opposition, however, came from Malone, who did not visit Norfolk Street, but perhaps got George Steevens to look at the manuscripts for him. The extraordinary spelling was sufficient evidence for a critic of Malone's acumen. He was not long in pronouncing his opinion against the manuscripts and promising an exposure. When 1796 arrived he was nearly ready

with his book; but on February 16th he advertised in the Press that its appearance had been delayed, probably till the end of the month. Ireland thinks that this was a manœuvre, there being no intention of publication until the eve of *Vortigern*.

On March 25th, when *Vortigern* had already been announced for Saturday, April 2nd, another advertisement appeared, to the effect that Mr. Malone's *Inquiry* would be published on March 31st; and Ireland says that next day several papers had elaborate critiques of the book. It seems doubtful whether any copies were in the hands of the public until after the performance. Samuel Ireland, indeed, in his preface to *Vortigern* speaks of the publication on the day before. But William Henry, alike in his *Authentic Account*, his *Confession*,[1] and his preface to the second edition in book-form of *Vortigern*, says that the performance came first. He adds that on the actual day, April 2nd, a notice was circulated by Malone that he had a work on the point of publication, which would infallibly prove the manuscripts in Mr. Ireland's possession to be mere fabrications. A copy of this came late into Samuel Ireland's possession, whereupon he at once got out a handbill for distribution to the multitudes choking up every avenue to Drury Lane. In the *Vortigern* preface he gives the text of this:

VORTIGERN.

A *malevolent* and *impotent* attack on the Shakspeare Mss. having appeared, on the *eve* of the representation of the play of *Vortigern*, evidently intended to injure the interests of the proprietor of the Mss., Mr. Ireland feels it impossible, within the short space of time that intervenes between the publishing and the representation, to produce an answer to the most illiberal and unfounded assertions in Mr. Malone's "Inquiry"; he is, therefore, induced to request that the play of *Vortigern* may be heard with that *candour* that has ever distinguished a *British audience*.

*The Play is now at the Press, and will, in a very few days, be laid before the public.*

The wording of this handbill seems rather to confirm the actual publication of the *Inquiry* before the play was performed; and certainly, from what Ireland has said before, review copies must have been out by March 31st. Malone had managed to strike his blow at the crucial moment.

Within the walls of Drury Lane all had not been going well.

[1] Malone, in a manuscript note in his copy of this, says, "It appeared two days before the play, as his father's *Handbill* shows." But the handbill does not say two days.

When the text of the play reached the theatre in December, the great John Philip Kemble, who was to play the title-rôle, showed himself suspicious of its genuineness. When rehearsals were in progress, Mrs. Siddons resigned the part of Edmunda, alleging a severe cold ; and Mrs. Palmer gave up Rowena for similar reasons. However, Mrs. Jordan remained to play Flavia, and substitutes were found for the other two leading ladies in Mrs. Powell and Miss Miller, so that the cast remained a strong one. Mrs. Jordan was young Ireland's great hope. He had written a song specially for her, and had provided her with an opportunity of donning the breeches—for was she not Mrs. Jordan? He claims that every character in *Vortigern* was specially written by him with some particular performer in view ; in which case he must have been hopeful of a Drury Lane production when he started on the play.

Thomas Linley, old friend of the Irelands, composed the music for Mrs. Jordan's song and other lyrics ; and, with Sheridan benevolent, the co-operation of the proprietors of the theatre toward a success seemed assured. Kemble's attitude, however, was ominous. As manager, he tried to make April 1st the opening night ; and when overruled in this, through the representations of Samuel Ireland, he chose as the after-piece, to follow *Vortigern*, a playlet entitled *My Grandmother*—a not too subtle indication of what he thought of the first piece !

The night of one of the most extraordinary scenes ever witnessed on the English stage had arrived. Advance booking had been splendid, and there were huge crowds waiting outside the theatre. One who was present says that a seat in the boxes was out of the question, so that he took his stand for the pit several hours before the doors were opened. When they were, the first rush was tremendous, and the immediate cry was " Full." He made swiftly for the 2*s*. gallery, ran upstairs, and to his surprise got a seat in the second row ; but " the rush, roar, and confusion behind me was astounding." He doubts whether more than a few paid for admission. There was, indeed, a great deal of " paper " in the house.

Another of the audience was in the second row of the pit. He

does not think there were twenty females in that part of the theatre, such was the eagerness of the gentlemen to gain admission. He agrees with the other witness about the unprecedented rush.

Young Ireland himself states that every seat in the boxes was taken in advance, and so eager were people to get in that they paid box prices and dropped down from the lower tier into the pit, into which they had been unable to get quickly enough through the pit doors. His father had a lower-tier box in the centre of the house, and had with him a party of friends. But the boy (who had a reason for first-night nervousness which none of the party could guess) arrived only shortly before the curtain rose, found the box too conspicuous, and retired behind the scenes, to talk with the amiable Mrs. Jordan in the green-room when she was not on the stage.

At last the performance began, Whitfield coming forward to speak a Prologue specially written for the play by Sir James Bland Sutton, after one by Poet Laureate Pye had been rejected as not enthusiastic enough. The play began, and at first all went well enough. *Vortigern* is not the worst piece ever seen at Drury Lane, though the idea that anyone could have been found to believe that Shakespeare had a hand in it " excites risibility," to borrow Ireland's phrase. It is pompous and turgid; but plays that offend far more in those respects have survived a first night. Its author evidently has a kindness for it, and considers that, had all the cast worked as loyally for it as Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Powell, it should have gone well. At the beginning of the third act, when, he says, " not a dissenting voice had been heard," Mrs. Jordan congratulated him on its success. But he had a presentiment, he claims, and replied that it would not be played a second time.

It is not clear at what precise point things began to go wrong. The eye-witness who made the strategic rush to the 2*s.* gallery says that on a certain passage a critic in the pit muttered rather loudly " *Henry the Sixth!* " whereon a slight titter arose. Similar ejaculations over other supposedly imitated passages were received in the same way.

From contemporary newspaper accounts it seems that the

opposition in the pit was led by a man named Sturt. The *Times*, veiling him under the title of Captain S——, says that "next to a principal actor," he was the prominent critic of the night, and adds that he was "drunk at least, if that be an excuse." The *Telegraph* says that Sturt's criticisms were evidently those of "the fifth bottle." Young Ireland, while just noticing Sturt's riotous behaviour, puts the real trouble down almost entirely to the bad acting of some male members of the Drury Lane cast. In his *Confessions* he is indignant with "the late facetious Mr. Phillimore, of *large-nosed* memory." Phillimore, playing the Saxon general, Horsus, mismanaged his death-scene so badly that the curtain came down on him, leaving his legs still exposed to the audience. Being incommoded by the weight of the curtain he declined, like Whiskerandos, in *The Critic*, to "stay dying here all night," and extricated himself, to the merriment of all.

Phillimore's "ill conduct and buffoonery" were bad enough. But much more serious was the behaviour of Kemble, which Ireland claims to have been "too obvious to the whole audience to need much comment." He then proceeds to comment at considerable length. The passage in which Kemble (whether or not it was, as Ireland asserts, intentionally) achieved the ruin of the play was a long speech by Vortigern in Act V., Scene 2. An extract will serve to show the quality of the play :

O sovereign Death!
Who hast for thy domain this world immense;
Churchyards and charnel-houses are thy haunts,
And hospitals thy sumptuous palaces,
And when thou would'st be merry, thou dost chuse
The gaudy chamber of a dying king.
O! then thou dost ope wide thy hideous jaws,
And with rude laughter and fantastic tricks
Thou clap'st thy rattling fingers to thy sides;
*And when this solemn mockery is ended,*
With icy hand thou tak'st him by the feet,
And upward so, till thou dost reach the heart,
And wrap him in the cloak of lasting night.

It was at the italicised line that the catastrophe occurred. Kemble uttered the words "in the most sepulcral tone of voice possible," whereat "the most discordant howl echoed from the pit that ever assailed the organs of hearing." When he could

be heard again, instead of going on to the next line, he repeated the unfortunate words, " with even more solemn grimace than he had in the first instance displayed."

Ireland's account is corroborated by one, and more or less by the other, of the two witnesses whom we have quoted above. There can be no doubt that Kemble's repetition of the line settled the fate of *Vortigern* for good and all. A great roar of laughter from the pit was taken up by the whole house, and the rest of the play was accompanied by merriment as uproarious as if it had been the broadest of farces. The words could hardly be heard. Mrs. Jordan struggled bravely when she came forward to speak the Epilogue, specially written by Robert Merry ; but Boaden, in his biography of her, represents her as extremely frightened at the dreadful noise. She had been attempting to comfort young Ireland in the green-room all the time, and doubtless tried again when the curtain came down. He expresses warm gratitude for her kindness to him ; and he certainly owed it to this generous-hearted woman that he could stand the ordeal through which he had gone.

Probably the boy hastened home at once. Not, however, or so he declares, before he had heard Sheridan in the green-room address Kemble in high displeasure, and tell him that it was not a question what *he* thought concerning the play ; he was merely a servant of the theatre, whose duty it was to exert himself to the utmost for the benefit of his employers. Kemble, it may be noted, in later years denied that he had failed to do his best for the piece. But it was very soon after the *Vortigern* affair that he threw up the managership of Drury Lane. The direct cause of that resignation was a quarrel with Mrs. Jordan over benefit nights. The fiasco of April 2nd must have made the air electric, however.

The elder Ireland accompanied his son back to Norfolk Street after *Vortigern's* uproarious ending ; and there they were soon joined by a few friends, who had come to discuss the evening. As he expected they would sit late, William Henry went up to bed and slept soundly, actually relieved in mind, he says, by the removal of the load which had oppressed it. On coming

down to breakfast on Sunday he was upbraided by his father for his want of feeling. Samuel's anger is easily intelligible. Here was, to him, a genuine Shakespeare play produced and damned. There could be no thought of a second performance, for when, at the close the previous night, Barrymore had announced a repetition the audience had loudly expressed their disapproval. And, in spite of this disaster, the elder Ireland saw no signs of acute distress on his son's face !

A slight consolation for Samuel was the news, when he called at Drury Lane on Monday morning, that there was £206 in the treasury, after payment of all expenses. Of this, by the agreement, half went to him. He gave £30 to his son, who therefore received altogether from *Vortigern* £90. This sum, he swears, was all that he ever got from his Shakespearian forgeries. He blames his father—it is very rarely that he does so in print, it must be allowed—for not having, as he had originally intended, published the book of *Vortigern* on the day of the theatrical production. He quotes Barker, the Russell Street bookseller, as telling him later that he would have given Mr. Ireland a thousand guineas for the copyright of *Vortigern*, to publish it at four o'clock on the afternoon of the production. But, " either from bad advice or some secret motive," says his son, Samuel Ireland did not publish the book until after William Henry's confession as to the authorship—when, naturally, there were no thousand guineas forthcoming.

Though *Vortigern's* stage career had finished on the night it began, the affair was very much " the talk of the town "—the title which the late James Payn selected for his entertaining novel on William Henry Ireland. If *Vortigern*, very obviously, was not by Shakespeare, who was the author ? everyone was asking. There was Mr. Malone's ponderous volume, pointing accusingly at the Irelands, and particularly at Samuel, who had dared, on the top of his exhibits at Norfolk Street, to introduce the play to Drury Lane. Malone had probability on his side. If the guilt of the fabrication rested between the Irelands, what was more reasonable than to suppose that it was the father, a mature man, for many years a devotee to the study of Shakespeare, rather

than the son, a mere lad of nineteen, who had tried to hoax the world with an impudent imposture?

Poor Samuel Ireland was nearly crushed with shame at the idea that he, of all men, the adorer of the Divine Bard, should commit such a crime. But he was capable of standing up to Malone, nevertheless. His son records an impromptu of his which shows that Samuel could at least smile amid his grief. Malone had concluded his *Inquiry* with a "vision." He had been wafted in sleep to Apollo's court, to hear judgment upon the impostor who had produced the pretended Shakespeare manuscripts. Samuel's retort was this:

> With a sorrowful phiz sage Minerva one morn
> Apollo bespoke on Parnassus' high steep:
> "'Tis stated *Malone* is come here!" With just scorn
> Apollo replied, "He was here *in his sleep.*"

The son also wrote several skits on Malone, one of which ends by declaring that he

> Prov'd by his notes what Shakspeare was at once—
> A godlike bard—himself an Irish dunce.

Malone was shown a copy of this by "one damned good-natured friend or another." He handed it back, with the remark that there was only one more document he wished to see concerning young Ireland. "What is that, sir?" he was asked. "His last dying speech and confession!"

Amid the storm of ridicule over *Vortigern* and the indignation aroused by the discovery that the new Shakespeariana were spurious, the Irelands did not lack supporters. Samuel's personal friends declined to think him guilty of fraud, and, strange as it may appear, believers in the genuineness of the documents were still fairly numerous. Malone had enemies, who by that feeling were drawn to the defence of Samuel and his manuscripts. Counter-blasts to the *Inquiry* were prepared and in due course published, notably an *Apology*, and subsequently a *Supplementary Apology*, by George Chalmers, the Scottish antiquary, and works by Francis Webb and John Wyatt. Sir Isaac Heard, Garter King-of-Arms, assured Samuel of his conviction that the bulk of the papers were authentic.

The " believers," as they came to be called, decided to organise an impartial committee of investigation into the source whence the manuscripts had been derived. With the formation of this committee of twenty-four, a period of torture began for young Ireland. On the night of *Vortigern* he had only paid a small instalment of the price for his practical joking. For the next two months further payments were relentlessly demanded him, until at last he broke down and fled. But that did not end his punishment. Thirty-six years later he was still complaining of persecution.

The committee called the boy before them, and attempted to cross-examine him as to the identity of Mr. H. His reply was that he came to exculpate his father, not to reveal anything further about the papers. He offered to take an oath that Samuel Ireland was in no way concerned in the discovery. This was not what the committee wanted. They had him before them twice more, and then drew up a petition, which they asked him to deliver to Mr. H., representing how unfair was Mr. Ireland's position in the eyes of the world, so long as the source of the papers was kept secret. Their anxiety to trace Mr. H. was so great, William Henry tells in his *Confessions*, that they even set someone to watch him in his walks, in order that they might find where he met the mysterious gentleman. Luckily, he adds, as they did not suspect the truth, they never thought of searching Bingley's chambers—where, locked up in a window-seat, he kept the apparatus for his forgeries and some specimens which he had not yet brought forward.

At last, wearied by the importunities of the committee and distressed at his father's misery, William Henry determined to make a clean breast of it. He did not, however, proceed to an open confession. He suggested that two " gentlemen of respectability," not members of the committee, should be chosen, to whom he promised Mr. H. would reveal the secret. The committee drew up a list of names, from which Mr. H. was to strike out those whom he would not accept. The next day the list was brought back to them with the unacceptable names crossed out. But it was found that the two gentlemen whom Mr. H. was willing

to accept would rather not undertake the commission. Then William Henry said that if Mr. Albany Wallis, who was a member of the committee, would take charge of the secret, he had no doubt he could persuade Mr. H. to disclose it to him. As previously he had represented that Mr. H. was apprehensive as to his position when the truth came out, and as the committee had then told him that Mr. H. ought to take legal advice, this solution commended itself to them. Wallis, for his part, consented to act.

Now, says Ireland, he went to Wallis and confessed all. At the same time he gave to him some unpublished specimens of his forgeries, having destroyed the rest. Wallis's advice was that he should maintain his silence about Mr. H. He himself promised to avoid any questionings, and to say that his professional advice had been that Mr. H. would not be safe in making his name public. Further, he would be " rigidly silent " himself as to the authenticity of the papers.

It is clear that, if Ireland's tale be true, Wallis here became an accessory after the fact. Further, though Ireland does not implicate Wallis any deeper in the imposture, it is impossible to resist a suspicion that the solicitor did know more about it than Ireland allows. That suspicion, indeed, arose in the minds of the critics as soon as the boy gave to the world his *Authentic Account*. Dr. Ingleby seems to believe it justified, and he directly accuses Wallis of having stolen from Mrs. Garrick, after her husband's death, that genuine Shakespearian deed which he had originally presented to Garrick. The deed certainly vanished from sight for some years, during which it *may* have been in Wallis's possession. But it is not essential, for the story of Ireland's frauds, that we should think that Wallis stole the deed and lent it to the boy. It had been reproduced in facsimile, and Ireland could as easily copy from the facsimile (which he says he did) as from the original document.

This matter of Wallis and the genuine deed is beside the point. What is very much to the point is that we cannot see a motive for Wallis's behaviour, after Ireland's confession to him ; that is to say, if it was a real confession of something quite new to him. Why should he, knowing that there was no such person

as Mr. H., advise the boy to continue his deception before the committee? There was danger for himself in such advice, unless he felt sure—and how could he?—that the deception would never be found out. It looks very much as if Wallis had known about the forgeries before Ireland's alleged " confession " to him. We might even go further, and conjecture that Wallis discovered the fraud at the time when he pointed out to Samuel Ireland the discrepancy between the signature on the deed in his possession and the genuine signature of John Heming; that he then made young Ireland confess, but only to himself; and that he agreed to keep his secret, and perhaps even aided him with suggestions how to keep up the hoax. This is no more than conjecture, however. William Henry Ireland, whatever his faults, is loyal to his friends and does not attempt to shift any of the blame from himself to either Talbot or Wallis.

Neither Samuel Ireland nor the committee derived any satisfaction from the interview between William Henry and Wallis. They were as far as ever from learning the source of the supposed Shakespearian manuscripts; and Samuel's name remained under the cloud of public suspicion. He was extremely hurt that the solicitor should have been admitted to the secret of Mr. H.'s identity, while he was still kept in the dark. He bitterly reproached his son, and the committee added their reproaches.

The idea of seeking Talbot's aid in solving the mystery seems to have occurred early to Samuel Ireland; for on April 15th Talbot sent from Dublin what can hardly be a spontaneous offer to make an affidavit, if " Sam " would join with him, that only they two and " a third person " knew the secret of the manuscripts. But the boy refused. He could not take such an oath, he explains, when there was really no third person.

What he was willing to do was to put a declaration, which was worded for him by Wallis, into some of the newspapers, such as the *True Briton* and the *Morning Herald*. " In justice to my father," this ran, " and to remove the reproach under which he has innocently fallen, respecting the papers published by him as the Mss. of Shakspeare, I do hereby solemnly declare that they were given to him by me as the genuine productions of

Shakspeare, and that he was and is at this moment totally unacquainted with the source from whence they came or with any circumstances concerning them, save what he was told by myself."

This declaration he signed " S. W. H. Ireland jun." and dated May 24th, 1796. It failed completely to pacify his father. The source of the papers was precisely what he did not wish to remain unacquainted with. Thwarted and angry, towards the end of May he accepted an invitation from some friends in Berkshire, and left town. From Berkshire he wrote a letter to his son which plainly shows his agitation. The wording, however, is quite loving. " It is now more than a week, my dear Sam," it begins, " since I left London, and not a word or a line from you." He begs to know what " Sam " is going to do about the papers. " My state is truly wretched. . . . No rest either night or day. . . . Surely, if there is a person for whom you can for a moment feel, it must be for a parent who has not ceased to render you every comfort and attention. . . . You seem to be estranging yourself, not only from me, but from all your family, and from all my acquaintances. . . . I know not the nature of your oaths and engagements, nor does the world, but it is universally allowed that no obligation should lead a parent into ruin." The letter is signed, " Your very sincere friend and affectionate father, Samuel Ireland."

Young Ireland gives the date of this letter as June 5th, 1796. Before he received it he had taken a desperate step. He says that he felt he could not tell the truth and then continue to live at Norfolk Street, a witness to his father's distress. So, on a day when the rest of the family were out, he packed such of his belongings as he could conveniently take away, sent a servant for a hackney-coach, and left his father's house for ever.

It was, as a matter of fact, on the very morning after the father wrote the above letter that the son fled. From a letter of Mrs. Freeman's to Montague Talbot, of which a draft is among Samuel Ireland's papers, we learn that on June 5th, being Sunday, she and Jane went over to Stockwell to dine and stay the night with Mrs. Barnard, Jane's sister. William Henry, " as usual,

declined associating with his family." When they got back on Monday evening he had gone.

The aunt does not spare her nephew. " Prompted, I presume, by vanity," she exclaims, " since not any one of his friends have ever discovered the least trait of *Literary Genius* in his character, he circulates a report that *He* alone is the author of all the papers, and the plays of *Vortigern* and *Henry the Second.* The former is a very good one, the latter most excellent ; but I who know his talent for romancing so well can never credit the report."

There is something suggestive in Mrs. Freeman's letter—written, it must be remembered, to a friend of young Ireland—of a cause of the boy's dissatisfaction with his home, apart from his remorse over what he had done to his father. There was also another reason for his departure, as we shall soon see.

About the second week in June, Samuel Ireland returned from Berkshire and was astounded to find his son missing. He called at once upon Albany Wallis, who declined to give him William Henry's address or to say anything about the " Shakespeare " manuscripts. Next came a letter from the boy, dated June 14th, in which he reaffirmed his authorship of the pretended discoveries, and said : " As you have no proof but my parole for the gift of *Henry the Second,* I now tell you that I beg your acceptance of the publication of *Vortigern,* and the whole of the profits of *Henry the Second.*" " Do not wish to meet me, my dear father," he also wrote, " I cannot yet bear it." He ended with love to " my dear aunt, my sister Anna and Jane," and signed himself " Your true, your loving son."

Mr. Ireland's reply next day was uncompromisingly severe, and showed no signs of acceptance of the olive-branch. He demanded, however, the further manuscripts which had formerly been promised to him. Of his state of mind Mrs. Freeman in her letter to Talbot (which was written on June 16th) says that it is one of " pitiable despair." She asks Talbot for " *Justice* "—to take the form of the affidavit which he had offered two months ago, and which she had already, on Mr. Ireland's behalf, written to accept.

On the same day that Mrs. Freeman wrote this, William Henry

sent another letter to his father, of whose letter to him he mildly complained as " rather harsh." He also announced his immediate intention of publishing a pamphlet explaining the whole business. He enclosed a note to Wallis, asking him to hand over to his father the papers he had deposited with him, and also to show him the statement to which he had sworn at the time of his confession.

Young Ireland had himself, apparently, gone to Wallis and had an affidavit drawn up, in which he solemnly declared that he had delivered the famous manuscripts to his father as manuscripts of Shakespeare, that Mr. Ireland was totally ignorant of their source, and that he had published them without the slightest intention of fraud.

Though this affidavit was prepared, it was not sworn. Samuel Ireland was dissatisfied with it, since it still left unsolved the mystery of the manuscripts' origin. As to his son's acknowledgment of authorship, he absolutely declined to credit it ! When he went to Wallis to receive the remaining papers, he told the solicitor that he did not believe there was a word of truth in the story. He was not shaken even when he was shown by Wallis specimen forgeries which William Henry had left with him. He clung obstinately to the genuineness of his Shakespeariana. His son, to him, was too young and not clever enough to have composed these wonderful things. He might have been the copyist ; but he was *not* the author.

Samuel now desired an interview with his son, and one was fixed for June 19th. Young Ireland, however, did not keep the appointment ; and his family remained in complete ignorance of what he was doing until suddenly, on July 4th, there came a terrible enlightenment. Samuel records this in a note among his papers. Mrs. Freeman on that day heard from Talbot that Miss Earle (sister or daughter of Earle the bookseller) told him she had seen " Sam " in Kensington Gardens on Sunday, June 26th, in the company of "a shortish woman, who appeared to be a girl of the town, and not very handsome."

On July 4th there came also a piece of news from Mrs. Linley, who told Jane Ireland she had seen " Sam " riding in the Park

the day before, with a servant on horseback behind him. But this tale was as nothing compared with the other. What did it mean? To the Irelands it must have appeared that William Henry had embarked on a life of dissipation. They were not altogether wrong. He was spending freely such money as he had in hand. But with regard to the lady, he had at least legally married her. On June 6th, the day that he left Norfolk Street, he was wedded at Clerkenwell Church to Alice Crudge, a person of whom we know nothing except what he chooses to tell[1] and what Miss Earle says about her. He must have been "carrying on" with her before June 6th, since presumably he did not walk out into the street and marry the first woman he met.

We have small information concerning his relations with the other sex. He speaks of the lack of "incitements to dissolute living" at Norfolk Street. Two anonymous love-letters addressed to him were received there some time after his departure and were preserved by Samuel Ireland; but they do not amount to much. Finally he made a second, quite respectable marriage, and the story about the unnamed woman at his funeral, who said he was the father of her four children, is not necessarily true. Altogether, on this side of his moral life, there are no proofs, only suspicions, of wrong-doing.

In spite of the shock which he received from Miss Earle's information about the apparent "girl of the town," Samuel Ireland continued to press for a meeting with his son. He expected him at Wallis's on July 10th or 11th; but again William Henry disappointed him. Instead, he went off on a tour to the West of England and Wales. One of Samuel's correspondents, J. Symonds Breedon, wrote to him on August 26th that a friend of his had met in Gloucestershire a young man of the name of Ireland, "travelling on foot in trousers." He described him as "very sprightly and very dashing, a spouting Richard, one who would have been a choice companion for young Harry & Co." This engaging person gave out that he had been in the 81st Foot, but was very glad to borrow a few guineas from Breedon's friend.

[1] That is very little. He does not mention her in his *Authentic Account* or *Confessions*. For allusions in his unpublished letters see p. 284 below.

Early in September young Ireland was in Bristol, on a pilgrimage to the home of his hero, Chatterton. He visited with delight and reverence the chamber in the turret of St. Mary Redcliffe and gazed on the now empty chests, made the acquaintance of Mrs. Newton, the poet's sister, and called upon a bookseller who had known him. There is no doubt about the sincerity of Ireland's worship of Chatterton, to whom sixteen years later he devoted the greater part of a poem on *Neglected Genius*.

By this time it is clear that Ireland had nearly exhausted his money; and he seems to have thrown out some hints which his father disregarded; for on September 16th he wrote to a Mr. Byng: "He, I conceive, must have forgotten the money *I lent him*, but memories are too oftentimes *treacherous*." We can hardly be surprised that Samuel Ireland was indisposed to look on the *Vortigern* money as a loan from his son to him, when we find him in July complaining to Wallis that the loss on his folio of *Miscellaneous Papers* would be near £400!

In every way the unlucky Samuel had reason to complain. Another appeal to Talbot for an affidavit had produced no result; and now his son carried out his threat of producing his account of the forgeries. For this purpose William Henry returned to London. On November 17th we find him writing to Talbot in Ireland, begging him to say no more about the papers and not to trouble himself to explain the business to his father. He himself was publishing a circumstantial account. "You may suppose," he adds, "what I have undergone to bring me to such a confession, . . . but I find that truth will always prevail."

Albany Wallis, though he had previously told young Ireland that he thought no blame would attach to him, a mere boy, for having written the "Shakespeare" manuscripts (a curious legal opinion!), was now against the publication of the *Authentic Account*. It was better to let the affair die out, he said. But young Ireland declined to do that. He was determined to do justice to his father's reputation. Besides, there was another motive, as became clear when father and son at last met. The son no longer desired to avoid a meeting, and Wallis had now

rather to urge the father, pointing out " Sam's great distress "—which was financial.

The elder Ireland gives a note of the interview, which took place at Wallis's chambers on December 12th. His son met him with great coolness and indifference. He had meant him no ill, he said, in making him the agent to convey the papers to the public. He was now in great want of money, and must publish his pamphlet to get some. Who had written the pamphlet? asked Samuel. He had, replied the other. Then Samuel turned to Wallis and protested that, if no one were called in to correct it, so ill written would it be that his son would be bound to give himself the lie when claiming to be the author of the papers. Wallis agreed, and said that he had already expunged many pages himself. Young Ireland was unmoved. The printer would correct the pamphlet, he said.

Samuel showed his son a letter from Bingley, complaining of his having broken his indenture. Young Ireland read it with indifference, folded it up and returned it without a word of apology. With that, " fully dissatisfied, we parted."

On the next day the son was very evidently fully dissatisfied. He wrote a letter, of scant politeness, to his father, signing himself " W. H. Freeman " (over an erased " W. H. Ireland "). In it he asks for his copy of *Henry the Second*, " as it rightly belongs to me," and for the loan of *Vortigern*. Also he wants his various belongings remaining at Norfolk Street, in order that he may sell them to discharge his debts and keep himself from immediate want. To this letter Samuel Ireland appears to have made no reply.

It is generally stated that the *Authentic Account* was published in November ; but from Samuel's report of the interview quoted above it would seem that its publication was subsequent to December 12th. Its author, in his later *Confessions*, speaks of it as " the production of perturbed moments " ; and the phrase is apt, for it is evident that his mental condition when he wrote it was one of great agitation, not conducive to clear narrative.

The *Authentic Account* was issued in an edition of five hundred copies, at the price of one shilling. So rare did these copies

become, wrote Ireland in 1805, that a single impression fetched as much as a guinea in the sale-room ; and he had to pay 18*s.* 6*d* for one with a page missing when he wanted it in connection with the writing of the *Confessions*.

Samuel Ireland was intensely annoyed at the publication of his son's pamphlet, and unjustly laid the blame for it upon Wallis. The solicitor, who was in a poor state of health, was angry in his turn, and at last, at the end of January 1797, young Ireland felt impelled to write a letter to him, in which he testified that he had published the *Authentic Account* entirely against his advice.

In the meanwhile Samuel had brought out *Mr. Ireland's Vindication*, in which he made a vigorous defence of himself against Malone, and printed letters from his son and Talbot, with other documents showing his complete innocence of complicity in the fraud. He followed this up with a work, written in collaboration with Thomas Caldecott, entitled *An Investigation of Mr. Malone's Claim to the Character of Scholar and Critic*, which again was not wanting in vigour.

But, however much the elder Ireland might impugn Malone's credit, he was unhappily powerless to restore his own. His enemies refused to give him a fair hearing. George Steevens affected even to believe that young Ireland's *Account* had been brought out by express arrangement with his father, in order to "whitewash the senior culprit." As for the Press, it abounded in attacks on father and son and in burlesques on *Vortigern*.

It is no wonder that Samuel's spirit was embittered, or that he found it impossible to forgive his son. In the advertisement to *Henry the Second*, in 1779, he could only allude to him "as the cause of all this public and domestic trouble." He did not even, on the title-pages of that play and of *Vortigern*, ascribe the authorship to him ; and he asked the public to form their own opinion as to the truth of his claim to it.

Samuel Ireland may quite well have continued to doubt that his son was capable of having written such plays. But can he have gone on believing that the plays, and the earlier "discoveries," were genuine Shakespeariana? Foolish and gullible as

we must consider him, it is difficult to credit that—except on the assumption that his wounded pride would not let him acknowledge his error, indeed actually blinded him to what otherwise he would have recognised as the truth.

## III

We have now practically reached the end of William Henry Ireland's career as a literary impostor. In a sense, however, he remained a faker to the end of his life; and certainly the world never let him forget that such was the light in which it regarded him. He was offered few chances of rehabilitating his character. Nor was he, like Psalmanazar, sufficiently strong to force his way into men's esteem, in spite of the notoriety of his youth. Ireland's remaining years were spent mostly in a dingy obscurity, though his literary activity, now diverted into straighter courses, never ceased until near the day of his death.

Owing to Samuel Ireland's habit of preserving letters and keeping, if not a diary, at least occasional notes of occurrences in his life, there is a little more intimate detail about his and his son's doings in 1797 than there is after that year. Relations between the two were, as we have seen, rather more than strained by the end of 1796; and 1797 had barely opened when the son wrote to his father that extraordinary letter from which we have already quoted at the beginning of this sketch. We have just seen how, on December 13th, he signed himself "W. H. Freeman." Now, on January 3rd, while reverting to the signature "W. H. Ireland," in the body of the letter he went further and suggested that he might not have a right to that name at all. What there was underlying this letter is not a matter upon which we can dogmatise. It may be no more than the spleen of a petulant youth of not yet twenty years, desirous of saying something that will wound. He does not again, in the few subsequent letters that survive, allude to any doubt as to his birth.

We hear no more of dealings between father and son until the end of March. On the 28th young Ireland wrote another letter, which is sufficiently curious to warrant its reproduction in full:

"Dr. Sir,—As you have many objections to letting the Wardrobe go out of your Hands, and as I should not wish to displease you by formally sending a Broker to appraise it, I beg you will yourself act as Auctioneer and fix what you think it worth. I shall be satisfied. Did not my situation require assistance, believe me when I assure you, it should be yours for nothing. With love to all.

"Believe me, Dr. Sir,
"Yours affectionately
"W. H. Ireland."

The "affection" was not exhibited very markedly when, three days later, Samuel Ireland went to a friend's place to meet his son and discuss his future in life. He kept a record of the interview. William Henry addressed him, he says, in a very cool, unfeeling manner, and neither touched his hat nor offered his hand; nor did he ever express any contrition for the past. When Samuel told him that he would never believe him to be the author of "the papers" until he gave other specimens of his abilities equal to them, his son replied, "I cannot write, because I have no money." "What have you been doing for ten months past," asked Samuel, "in which time I can prove you have received more than £150?" "I have paid away a very great deal."

After a wrangle about the publication of the *Authentic Account*, Samuel reverted to the subject of the papers and challenged his son for *proof* of his authorship. "I believe you neither can nor will be able to bring proofs that will convince the public," he said. "Those are bold and hard words for any man to say," sneered William Henry. Indignantly Samuel said that he was not accustomed to such language, and hurried away downstairs. As far as we know, father and son never met again.

However, correspondence between them did not cease. On April 12th young Ireland sent a letter in which he expresses thanks for his father's kindness. Had he not wanted the money, he would not have troubled him for it at all. If he offended at their last interview, it was not intentionally, and he sincerely

begged forgiveness! Is this letter sarcastic? It looks rather as if Samuel had relented and given his son some money; or perhaps he had agreed to the sale of the wardrobe. We know that previously he had allowed him to send for the books, prints, etc., which he had left at Norfolk Street.

A gap of some months follows, during which Samuel was out of London. Then, on October 1st of the same year, he wrote to Albany Wallis a letter in which he plainly showed that he had not forgiven his son and that he was very sore about the loss on his "Shakespearian" productions. Just a month later he received a communication from his son, who said he had plate in pawn for £7, which had cost £16. For the best part of six months he had been living on his wife's "Cloaths, Linnen, furniture &c." He could produce upwards of thirty tickets to prove this. Could his father assist him in any way? He spoke of his willingness to go on the stage, but that no one would engage him; and of his desire to go abroad. The finish is: "With kind remembrances to Mrs. Freeman, Miss Ireland &c. believe me, Dr. Sir, Yours still most affectionately, W. H. Ireland."

Very probably this letter was the most genuine thing William Henry Ireland ever wrote. But it evidently failed to touch his father's heart—or pocket. On December 1st Mr. Ireland received another from him, in a very different strain, sarcastic and very bitter. After complaining that, while his appeal had been treated with silent contempt, his letter had been shown to other people, he continues:

> "I am astonished to find by report that, although Mrs. Ireland is lawfully my wife and has for sixteen months passed [*sic*] conducted herself in the most irreproachable manner, that calumny has not spared her, but branded her with the title of my mistress. If, Sir, you should anywhere chance to hear these reports of the day, I would thank you to contradict them, for, though they affect me or my wife but little, yet they tend to give me a *strong assurance* that I have some enemies who endeavour still to injure me as much as possible in the world's esteem."

SAMUEL IRELAND

*From the caricature by Gilray*

[p. 284

We know so little of Mrs. Ireland, formerly Alice Crudge, that we cannot tell whether people were justified in talking about her past. But her husband was certainly entitled to resent false statements with regard to her present; and this part of his letter inspires some sympathy with him.

Only one more communication from young Ireland is preserved among his father's papers, which is recorded as having been received on December 20th, 1797, by the hand of J. F. Newton. In it he speaks of the prospect of a trial, and says that if he had known it would come on so soon he would not have objected to remaining in England. He begs to be allowed to come into court to swear to the truth of every statement in his pamphlet, and, if he is not allowed, he will prepare an affidavit to that effect.

We might gather from this letter that young Ireland was out of England; but it may mean no more than that he had intended, against his father's wishes, to leave the country. The trial to which he refers is the case which Samuel Ireland contemplated bringing against those responsible for a venomous pictorial libel upon him, published on December 1st. This was the Gilray portrait, reproduced here, which was issued under the title of *Notorious Characters: No. I.*, and accompanied by some very direct verses by William Mason. It can well be realised that Samuel Ireland was hard hit by this attack, which was commended to the attention of the public by a reference to it in a short article by Malone in the *Gentleman's Magazine.*

Though he went so far as to consult counsel in the matter, Samuel Ireland did not carry out his intention of prosecuting his libellers on this occasion. He contemplated legal action at various times against others of his traducers, but never actually brought a case into court, perhaps through want of sufficient money. Apart from his loss over the publication of his folio, he was hard hit in other ways by the exposure of his son's mischievous hoax. A target for ridicule and abuse, he could no longer command the same public as before for his books of *Picturesque Views.* The position he had held before 1796 was beyond recovery, and he bore up ill against adversity. Though there is reason to think that he died of diabetes, to some degree

also he was a victim of broken heart. On his death-bed in July 1800 he declared to Latham, the doctor who attended him, that he had been totally ignorant of his son's deceit and had believed, equally with the most credulous, in the authenticity of the papers.

As has been said, no meeting is known to have taken place between Samuel and Henry Ireland after that of March 31st, 1797. Presumably, therefore, the father died unreconciled to his son. The latter had been hard put to it to make a living after he had sold the last of the possessions which his father had allowed him to take away from Norfolk Street. He had many plans in his head for plays, such as the historical series of which we have already heard. But the author of *Vortigern* was hardly likely to appeal to the theatrical manager as a magnet to the public. As an actor, the *Vortigern* affair prevented him from even getting a trial—which was not fair, but was perhaps natural. It was a rash thing to have played a joke on the Drury Lane management.

Somehow or other Ireland got together enough money to open a circulating library in Kensington in 1778. His shop was in Prince's Place, where, in addition to lending books, he also sold copies of his famous fakes. Dr. Ingleby in his *Shakespeare Fabrications* describes this as "forging his father's forgeries." We have seen that Ingleby subsequently withdrew his imputations against Samuel Ireland; and there appears no proof that William Henry, when he now sold his specimens of forgery, claimed that they were what he had passed off on his father and other credulous people as genuine Shakespeariana.

By various means Ireland managed to make a scanty living until in 1802 a stroke of better fortune seemed to be coming to him. The Princess Elizabeth, who afterwards married the Landgrave of Hesse-Homburg, was giving a fête at Frogmore and, for some reason which we do not know, engaged Ireland to superintend the theatricals. According to Ingleby, in his later and less hostile account of Ireland, the apparent stroke of fortune turned out to be illusory. He wrote two pieces for the fête and spent four days in the preparations. At the end he was offered a five-pound note, which he had the spirit to return.

In 1805, being now about twenty-eight, Ireland gave to the world his *Confessions*, a much larger work than his *Authentic Account*, though on the same theme. He had much difficulty in procuring a copy of the earlier pamphlet to refresh his memory; and, curiously, he did not take great pains to make the two works tally in minor details. His mind evidently remained "perturbed" when he had to deal with the hectic days of 1795–6.

We have, in the preceding pages, heard much of what Ireland has to say on his own behalf in his *Confessions*. We may now glance at the "Defence" with which he concludes that book, after complaining that it is time, he thinks, that he should now "cease to endure the blighting censure of malignity rather than the mild and convincing reproof of Truth."

He grounds his defence on seven points:

(1) He did not (in his deceptions) intend injury to anyone.

(2) He really injured no one.

(3) He was not actuated by any pecuniary motive.

(4) He did not actually benefit.

(5) Those who came to inspect the papers had only themselves to blame for all subsequent to the fictitious Shakespeare-Fraser deed.

(6) As he was scarcely seventeen and a half when he began his deceptions, his boyhood should in some measure have screened him from his persecutors' malice.

(7) What his persecutors had resented was that they had been taken in by a boy, and that the imposition had been on their intellectual faculties. Had he been a man of science and learning, they would have pardoned him as more on a level with them. He would have been a "dangerous forger, but *a very clever man*."

Ireland proceeds to elaborate these points; but we need not go into his elaborations, except on the two principal grievances he had against his assailants—that they insisted he had had a pecuniary motive, and that they made no allowance for his youth. He had, at the time when he began his deceptions, all that was necessary for existence from his father. He had no incitements to dissolute living, and his long office hours left him little time for the pursuit of pleasure. He did not bargain with

his father before handing over the manuscripts to him. From *Vortigern* he only got £90, though in all it earned £403. Against this might be set the facts that he was forced to leave his father's house before he was twenty, that he received not a shilling from his family afterwards, and that he had to break his indenture.

With regard to his youth, so far were his censors from making any allowance for it that "Mr. Ritson has stated in his usual acrimony that every literary impostor deserves hanging as much as a common felon," and Mr. Malone had compared him with William Lauder and Psalmanazar.[1] "I candidly submit to the generous public," was Ireland's reply, "whether my age and the causes leading to the fabrication of the papers should not be taken into consideration, and whether I may not be acquitted of everything except boyish folly."

This "Defence" is not without some plausibility. William Henry Ireland obviously did not intend to injure anyone when he began his frauds. The injury which he actually did by his practical joking was inflicted on some very foolish people, who were old enough to know better than be taken in by most palpable fakes. He did not act in a mercenary manner at the start; he cleared very little profit until the *Vortigern* agreement was made, and even then he received but a small share of the money gained. Even if he did, as Ingleby alleges, after his downfall take to forging fresh copies of his former forgeries, it must be remembered that he had lost all, his home, his indenture with Bingley, and his prospects, and was reduced to desperation. Lastly, he was hounded down with a lack of mercy seldom shown to literary fakers far older than he.

It is not known how much money Ireland made out of his *Confessions*. At any rate they served to bring him before the public eye again. That may not seem to have been a desirable thing. Yet he did gradually build up a steady connection with publishers; and, lack of energy not being one of his failings, he poured forth a constant stream of writings of the most varied

[1] William Lauder, who died six years before Ireland's birth, had forged (as a joke, he afterwards pleaded) passages in the later Latin poets, which he alleged Milton to have plagiarised.

To the comparison with Psalmanazar, Ireland could not legitimately object on the ground of age.

description for the remainder of his life. He spent a considerable period of time out of England; he speaks in the preface of his edition of *Vortigern* of "a continuance of nine years upon the Continent." Which those nine years were cannot be fixed. He claims to have been at the melancholy, almost poverty-stricken funeral of Mrs. Jordan at Saint-Cloud on July 5th, 1816, and to have paid the last tribute of respect to her who had once been so kind to him.

He profited by his stay in France to extend the acquaintance which he had made in boyhood with the French language, and through it obtained commissions for translations, of which the principal one was *Louis Napoleon's Answer to Sir Walter Scott.* He also wrote a four-volume *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* and other historical books. Of his less solid work, Sir Sidney Lee says that his verse shows some literary facility, and his political squibs some power of sarcasm. His novels are buried in oblivion.

We get exceedingly little personal information about Ireland after his father's notes and correspondence cease. A few scraps are to be found in the preface to his edition of *Vortigern*, including one curious anecdote of his re-encounter with James Boaden, his father's former friend, who afterwards joined the enemy. In the year 1824 W. H. Ireland was engaged in work for Triphook, the Bond Street publisher. Boaden, now over sixty years of age, was at the time seeing through the press his enquiry into the authenticity of the various portraits of Shakespeare. They met several times at Triphook's office; and Ireland, "without rancour," as he says, offered to furnish Boaden with an account of a number of spurious oil-paintings and miniatures. He sent this to Boaden through Triphook, only to find that Boaden, so far from using it, made a violent attack in his book upon the "impudent and unskilful" forgeries of 1795.

Now, one day previous to the publication of the book, Boaden and Ireland walked down together from Bond Street to the end of Buckingham Street, Strand, talking about Shakespeare and about the younger man's forgeries. Suddenly Boaden paused and, pompously addressing his companion, said: "You must be aware, Sir, of the enormous crime you committed against

the divinity of Shakespeare. Why, the act, Sir, was nothing short of sacrilege! It was precisely the same thing as taking the holy chalice from the altar and —— therein!" Had he raised his eyes and met Boaden's, says Ireland, he could not have repressed a burst of laughter. He continues:

> "To hear an aged, walking mass of mortality utter such an example of mingled pedantry and folly has left such an enduring impression upon my mind that I never pass the spot in question without a sentiment of pity on recalling the ravings of a self-created expounder of Shakespeare, dwindled into second childhood."

As Boaden was still alive when Ireland published this story, he could appreciate that he had at last succeeded in inspiring him with "rancour."

It was in 1832, when Ireland was fifty-five years of age, that he brought out his new edition of *Vortigern*, with a preface by himself, his father's original preface, and a facsimile of one page of the manuscript—the page containing the address to Death and the famous line with which Kemble wrecked the play. In his preface he speaks of "the shafts of persecution relentlessly levelled against me for upwards of thirty years." He writes enthusiastically of his father and his love of Shakespeare; and he gives a fresh account of the production of the play, of which we have made full use in the preceding pages. To his enemies, and his father's, he metes out vigorous punishment. It may be noted that he mentions as particularly hostile to him Malone, Kemble, Parr, Boaden, and Waldron—the last-named being the gentleman whom Samuel Ireland in his *Vindication* had stigmatised as "a bad actor and a worse critic." He complains that George Chalmers, who, as we have seen, had entered the lists against Malone, had nevertheless entirely ignored two "humble apologetic letters" which he had sent him with reference to the hoax which he had played upon the admirers of Shakespeare.

Altogether, in his *Vortigern* preface, W. H. Ireland did his best to square accounts with those against whose persecutions he

protested. Whether he made money by this new edition of the play, as in the case of the *Confessions*, we are ignorant. It is not probable that he made much. The whole affair of the forged Shakespeariana had by 1832 become a matter of almost antiquarian interest only, though of course there were still a number of people living who had witnessed the performance of 1796. But, to the mass of people, Ireland was a mere name, and his death on April 17th, 1835, caused no stir. His last days were spent at Sussex Place, St. George's-in-the-Fields, but his circumstances at the time are obscure. Though we never hear of the death of his first wife, Dr. Ingleby is authority for the statement that he had married the widow of Captain Paget, R.N., a lady by birth, one of the Culpeppers of Kent Castle, and that the marriage was an unhappy one. He is said to have left a daughter, who became Mrs. A. M. de Burgh.

William Henry Ireland was dead. But echoes of the struggle which his misdeeds had aroused continued to resound at intervals for many years in critical circles. No defender of the dead appeared; but additional disgrace was heaped upon the name of Ireland. Twenty years after William Henry's death an anonymous writer in *Willis's Current Notes*, replying to an enquirer who signed himself "Nemo," said that he had long known the late W. H. Ireland and could communicate some little known particulars about him.

In the pages of the magazine, what the anonymous writer has to say is the story which we have already heard; that Samuel Ireland was the original deviser of the frauds, that his daughters wrote the imitations, and that William Henry was merely the copyist. As for the *Confessions*, they were just a means of raising the wind. The writer had heard William Henry say, in their regard, "When needs must, the Devil drives!" This is a new version of the proverb.

"Nemo" appears to have been none other than Dr. C. M. Ingleby; for Ingleby, in the appendix to his *Shakespeare Fabrications*, after quoting from *Willis's Current Notes*, goes on to say that on the occasion of W. H. Ireland's funeral, at which *his* informant was present, a woman appeared at the graveside

and gave the mourners to understand that the deceased was the father of her four children, having deceived her like everyone else. He had been living with her unknown to his family. Further, this informant, who claimed to have been an intimate acquaintance of the Ireland family, said he had received from W. H. the last confession of the falsity of his *Confessions*. He declined, however, to give the further particulars which he had volunteered before, " on the ground that the subject was too painful a one. In this shocking case," he asserted, " the *de mortuo verum* is too vile for publicity."

Ingleby later, in a paper read before the Royal Society of Literature in 1878, makes some amends for repeating tittle-tattle about the Irelands. He exonerates the father completely from any share in the frauds; and he regrets having paid much attention to the writer in *Willis's Current Notes*, whom he identifies with Burn, assistant and afterwards son-in-law to William Hone.

It is difficult to explain the bitter animus with which those who took part in the controversy over the Ireland forgeries pursued their author when living, and his memory when dead. Perhaps it is because the people against whom he came up belonged to that *genus irritabile*, the professional (or, as Ireland says, self-created) critics. They were in his days, to a far greater extent than now, a ferocious crew, who delighted in the use of invective. Ireland had endeavoured to take them in, had, indeed, for a time taken in a number of them, thereby exposing their pretensions to wisdom and raising up against them a chorus of ridicule. This was unforgivable. It does not, however, inspire us with respect for their characters that they proceeded to act upon the principle that any stick was good enough to beat a dog with. There is something in their victim's dictum that " the mild and convincing reproof of Truth " was the right punishment for him, not " the blighting censure of malignity."

The real William Henry Ireland was, no doubt, a creature of little worth. What there is of personal revelation in his books, and still more in his surviving letters, shows this. Circumstances were against him. Brought up in a home where, evidently,

there was scant appreciation of his literary ambitions, he found a method of expression which at once soothed his vanity and tickled his sense of humour. People would not listen to him when he was himself; but they would listen to him when he pretended to be Shakespeare. We can appreciate his silent laughter when he saw the big-wigs, with deep reverence, drinking in as the words of the Divine Bard the compositions of his own imagination a few days or weeks earlier. It was a mirth-provoking spectacle. But it was bought at the expense of a ruined life.

The jest turned to ashes; and the last laugh was against the jester. Worse still, countless people refused to see the jest at all and, like Ritson, would have condemned its perpetrator to the common felon's fate. Ireland might have been tempted, if he knew the author, to exclaim with Catullus,

O this tasteless, lackwit generation!

# NOTES

## NOTES

### THE SALAMANCA DOCTOR AND HIS FRIENDS

p. 13, l. 1. From the Latin MS. *Persecutionis Anglicanæ et Conjurationis Presbyterianæ Historia* in Cambridge University Library, the work of Father John Warner, at one time Provincial of the Jesuits in England, Rector of St. Omer 1683–6, and thereafter confessor to James II.

p. 13, l. 21. The quotations from Roger North are all taken from his *Examen*, except where it is otherwise specified.

p. 14, l. 7. This statement is made in the *Florus Anglo-Bavaricus*, the history of the English College of the Jesuits at St. Omer, published at Liège in 1685.

p. 14, l. 11. L'Estrange's description (if he is the actual author of *A Hue and Cry after Dr. O.*, 1681) may be considered too much in the nature of vulgar abuse:

> "His marks are: The off leg behind something shorter than the other, and cloven foot on the nether side; his face rainbow colour, and the rest of his body black. Two slouching ears ready to be cropped the next spring if they do not drop off before. . . a short neck, which makes him defy the pillory, and thin chin, bending up to his nose; he hath few or no teeth in the upper jaw, but bites with his tongue. His voice something resembles that of the Guinney pigs. His eyes are very small and sunk, and he is supposed to be either thick ey'd or noon blind, by reason that he did not know Coleman by candle light, though he had before sworn treason against him."

p. 14, l. 15. William Smith, *Intrigues of the Popish Plot* (1685).

p. 14, l. 34. Anthony [à] Wood, *Life and Times*, II. 417.

p. 14, l. 36. See *British Museum Additional MSS.* 5860, fol. 288, where there is a copy, dated 1780, of a paper drawn up by Dr. Zachary Grey. This gives particulars of the connection of Samuel and Titus Oates with Cambridge University, etc.

p. 15, l. 6. *e.g.* Seccombe, who is inclined to reject the story of William, the horse-stealer, and does not appear to have heard of Sam.

p. 15, l. 22. Roger North, in his *Examen* (1740), makes Samuel Oates already chaplain to Pryde's regiment when Titus was born. Wood, on the other hand, makes him go away to sea after his misadventures as a dipper. But Wood is inaccurate in many of his statements about the Oateses before 1678.

p. 15, *n.* All the references to evidence at the various Popish Plot trials are from the volumes of *State Trials.* It has not been thought necessary to quote the exact page in every case.

p. 16, l. 26. It is generally stated that Titus was two years at Caius. But Dr. Grey's paper, mentioned above, distinctly states that he was admitted to St. John's on February 2nd, 1668.

p. 18, l. 26. Sir Roger L'Estrange, the Licenser or Overseer of the Press. All the references are to his *Brief History of the Times* (1687), unless it is otherwise stated.

p. 19, l. 5. I have followed, in the affair between the Oateses and the Parkers, the chronology of the evidence given at the Castlemaine trial (*St. T.*, VII. 109) rather than that of Anthony Wood (*Life and Times*, II. 417), who makes the acquittal of Parker senior by the Privy Council precede the charge against Parker junior. Castlemaine produced official records, whereas Wood only writes from hearsay.

p. 20, l. 21. Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, II. 157.

p. 22, l. 16. *The Life of Francis North*, Roger North's biography of his brother Francis, Baron Guilford, Lord Chancellor.

p. 22, l. 32. See *St. T.*, VII. 1320.

p. 23, l. 26. Mr. Seccombe was the author of the section devoted to Titus Oates in *Lives of Twelve Bad Men* (1894) and of the article upon him in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1895). As these were pioneer works, at any rate as regards Oates's personal life, there has naturally been a good deal discovered since which might have caused the writer to alter some of his views.

p. 25, l. 22. Lord Macaulay is particularly severe toward Sir Roger L'Estrange; but that was only to be expected. It is hard, of course, to defend his character as a whole. See p. 33 above.

p. 26, l. 7. Simpson Tonge's statements may be found in L'Estrange's *Brief History* and in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 1679–80; and in *The Narrative and Case of Simpson Tonge* and *Mr. Tonge's Vindication*, published in 1681 and 1682 respectively.

p. 27, l. 27. *Florus Anglo-Bavaricus* has little to say of Oates's sojourn at Valladolid, and I have come across no evidence from Spain. A witness at the Castlemaine trial (*St. T.*, p. 1098) said Oates was at the College four months only.

p. 30, l. 35. See the Rev. John Gerard, S.J., *The Popish Plot and its Latest Historian* (1903), on the subject of this Provincial Congregation.

p. 36, l. 13. The Articles were published in 1679 under the title of *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot and Conspiracy.*

p. 43, l. 2. "Tormentilio." This explains two obscure passages in Williamson's notes, *Cal. St. P.*, 1679–80.

p. 44, l. 26. Kirkby published in 1679 *A Compleat and True Narrative of the Manner of the Discovery of the Popish Plot to His Majesty.*

p. 46, l. 32. Andrew Lang, in his study of the Godfrey mystery (*The Valet's Tragedy and Other Studies*, 1903) made a gentle protest on behalf of the Duke.

p. 48, l. 22. See *Cal. St. P.*, 1678.

p. 50, *n.* *The Popish Plot*, p. 78.

p. 51, l. 24. *Ib.*, p. 80.

p. 52, l. 24. L'Estrange notes this favourite "banter" of Oates.

p. 52, l. 28. *Cal. St. P.*, 1678.

p. 54, l. 1. L'Estrange collected much information about Godfrey and his circle.

p. 56, l. 32. See Welden's evidence in L'Estrange, and also in the *House of Lords MSS.*

p. 57, l. 29. Wynell's deposition is also in L'Estrange, as are Mrs. Gibbons's, Mrs. Pamphlin's, and Henry Moor's, quoted on pp. 58–9, 63–4, and Angus's, on p. 60.

p. 61, l. 34. L'Estrange asks, pertinently, why the murderers should expect to find in Godfrey's pocket the information which he had taken a fortnight before, and what good would the mere papers be to them.

p. 67, l. 15. *Cal. St. P.*, 1678.

p. 67, l. 30. L'Estrange says that he was first an errand-boy, and then a footman, in the latter position getting to know about the men of quality whom he later impersonated.

p. 68, l. 13. The note of Bedloe's examination before King and Council on November 7th is in the *Longleat MSS., Coventry Papers*, XI. The statement before the House of Lords on November 8th is in *Lords Journal*, XIII.; the so-called "Mr. Bedloe's confession before his Majesty of the murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey" in *B. M. Add. MSS.* 11055, fol. 245. Father Gerard, in his *Popish Plot and its Latest Historian*, clears up some mistakes about these statements of Bedloe's.

p. 70, l. 2. *Cal. St. P.*, Williamson's notes of the Council meeting, November 25th, 1678.

p. 70, l. 19. *Ib.*, 1678, pp. 550–1.

p. 73, l. 16. *Ib.*, October (?) 20th, 1678.

p. 74, l. 16. Mr. Pollock says (pp. 327–8) of this refusal of the certificate against the accused: "It was a regular and unbroken rule of the court that no evidence could be brought, if such an expression may be used, from outside the trial. . . . Every trial stood by itself, and everything alleged at it had to be proved or disproved on the spot, either by direct evidence or by judicial records sworn at the trial to be correct."

p. 76, l. 5. When L'Estrange also says that Prance "had not the brand upon him of an infamous course of life," he is referring to his past career compared with those of Oates and Bedloe.

p. 78, l. 3. This note of Williamson's, presumably, Mr. Pollock had

not seen when he scouted the charge of torture (*The Popish Plot*, p. 137).

p. 79, *n.* See especially the chapters, "Bedloe and Prance," "Prance and Bedloe," and "The Secret," pp. 117–66. The case against Mr. Pollock's theory has been ably conducted by Andrew Lang and Father Gerard—in the works already referred to in these Notes—and by Alfred Marks in his *Who Killed Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey?* (1905) and his subsequent article on the matter in *The Month*, 1907.

p. 80, l. 19. Mr. Marks, not unjustifiably, ridicules the picture of the "astute and audacious" Prance. It would certainly be a curious "Jesuit agent" who helped to procure the death of the Five Jesuits, to name no other victims.

p. 82, l. 29. Mr. Muddiman draws attention to a curious fact. Pembroke's wife was Henriette de Kéroualle, sister of the King's Roman Catholic mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth. The hated Duchess was impeached. "Yet nothing was done against her, thanks to Shaftesbury, and she actually supported the Bill of Exclusion and the claim of Monmouth to the throne."

p. 83, l. 12. See the evidence of Brumwell and Walters, p. 61.

p. 87, l. 3. *St. T.*, X. 1185.

p. 89, l. 16. See Father Gerard's spirited defence of the St. Omer witnesses in *The Popish Plot and its Latest Historian.*

p. 90, l. 3. *St. T.*, VII. 172–3.

p. 98, *n.* A copy of this may be seen in the British Museum.

p. 98, l. 28. We are told by history that John of Gaunt was *not* married to Katherine, widow of Sir Hugh Swynford.

p. 100, l. 28. See Smith's *Intrigues of the Popish Plot.*

p. 101, l. 10. Mr. Pollock is kinder to Scroggs's character than might have been expected (*The Popish Plot*, pp. 354–5).

p. 101, l. 34. *Cal. St. P.*, 1679–80, p. 376.

p. 105, l. 27. L'Estrange, *Zakiel and Ephraim* (October 1680).

p. 106, l. 4. Narcissus Luttrell, *Brief Historical Relation.*

p. 106, l. 31. *Cal. St. P.*, 1680–1, p. 43.

p. 112, l. 5. *Savile Correspondence*, February 1681.

p. 112, l. 16. Smith's *Deposition*, at end of *Intrigues of the Popish Plot.*

p. 115, l. 30. *Ibid.*

p. 117, l. 13. For the news-letters and Warcup's statements, see *Cal. St. P.*, 1680–1.

p. 117, l. 27. Mr. Seccombe, both in his sketch in *Lives of Twelve Bad Men*, and in his *D. N. B.* article, makes a mistake of a year as to Oates's eviction from Whitehall and loss of his pension. Contemporary pamphlets, in the British Museum, confirm the evidence of the State Papers as to the year being 1681, not 1682.

p. 118, l. 4. *Cal. St. P.*, 1680–1, p. 604.

p. 118, l. 29. L'Estrange's account, *Cal. St. P.*, 1680–1, p. 583.

p. 127, l. 7. This *Account* was published in 1696.

p. 127, l. 33. My friend, Major G. Allan Heron, calls my attention to the fact that in the "General Amnesty or Act of Oblivion" issued by James II. on March 10th, 1686 (Roberts's *Life of the Duke of Monmouth*, II., p. 258), the list of exceptions concludes with the names: "Titus Oates, clerk. Robert Ferguson, clerk." I know of no reason for connecting Oates, safely housed in prison, with the Monmouth rebellion.

p. 127, l. 35. The story of the bedmaker's child is given by Anthony Wood.

p. 127, l. 37. *Sound Advice to Roman Catholics* is the pamphlet's name.

p. 129, l. 16. *B. M. Add. MSS.* 5860, fol. 268. The full title of the book is given as *A Confession of Faith put forth by the Elders and Brethren of Many Congregations of Christians (baptised upon Profession of their Faith) penes me T. B.*

p. 130, l. 33. Thomas Hearne's entry, July 16th, 1705, is simply: "On Thursday last died Titus Oates, the sham Salamanca Doctor."

p. 131, l. 6. It is difficult to arrive at an estimate of the number of people who owed their death to Titus Oates. Mr. Alfred Marks (*Who Killed Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey?*) reckons the direct victims of the Popish Plot at sixteen, including the three executed over Godfrey's death. But this does not include any who died in gaol before trial, nor those executed simply for being Roman Catholic priests. On the other hand, Oates was only partly responsible for the deaths, his evidence alone being insufficient to convict. But he, with Tonge, must bear the responsibility for leading the way to "the Terror."

## DUKE DANGERFIELD.

p. 136, l. 1. *Don Tomazo, or the Juvenile Rambles of Thomas Dangerfield*, printed, with no author's name, by William Rumbald, in the Old Change (1680). For the diary, see p. 186.

p. 136, l. 5. *Autobiography of Sir John Bramston*, first published in 1845.

p. 136, l. 7. The Rev. J. W. Ebbsworth, who writes the article on Dangerfield in the *D. N. B.*, gives 1650 as the provisional date of his birth. But Mrs. Cellier, in *The Matchless Picaro*, the pleasant little appendix to her *Malice Defeated*, wherein she summarises what information she has been able to ascertain of Dangerfield's criminal career, distinctly states that his second English conviction, at the Old Bailey, was in his nineteenth year and the twenty-fifth year of Charles II.—1673, counting 1649 of course as his first year. We may take it Mrs. Cellier was at pains to get her dates correct, and she had no motive for falsifying them.

p. 136, *n.* *The Case of Tho. Dangerfield,* " written by the hand of an indifferent person " (1680).

p. 143, l. 19. *The Matchless Picaro* mentioned in the note above, Mrs. Cellier's deadly answer to " the virtuoso who accused me." It is a very thorough piece of destructive biography.

p. 143, l. 35. North, in his *Examen,* points out that Mrs. Cellier wrote when all the persons she mentioned were still living and could contradict her if she lied. He thinks that what she wrote of her own dealing and knowledge is likely to be true—allowing for " female prejudice and fond credulity."

p. 146, l. 12. The article on Elizabeth Cellier in the *D. N. B.*, by Mr. Thompson Cooper, F.S.A., is brief ; and, in spite of her fame, or notoriety, the lady's career is very difficult to follow through the pages of contemporary writers.

p. 146, l. 13. The Dormers were a numerous family, of whom the majority seem to have retained the Roman Catholicism of their ancestors, which was fervent. The identity of Mrs. Cellier's father has not been determined ; but her connection with Peterley, Bucks, was close during her life, and at her death she was buried (according to Lyson's *Magna Britannia*, I., pt. 3, p. 695) in the chancel of the church at Great Missenden, in the parish of which Peterley lay.

It may be noted that Elizabeth was a favourite name in the Dormer family, perhaps from the time when Robert, first Baron Dormer of Wing, married Elizabeth, daughter of Anthony (Browne), Viscount Montague.

" Mary, daughter of —— Cellier," who appears in the genealogies as the wife of Charles Dormer, of Peterley, and mother of Charles, fifth Baron Dormer, was perhaps the daughter of Peter and Elizabeth Cellier.

p. 148, l. 32. " A brief account of the tyrannical barbarisme inflicted on the King's prisoners in His Majesty's goal [*sic*] of Newgate." This is published in full in *Malice Defeated.*

p. 150, l. 17. Dangerfield's report is also included in *Malice Defeated.*

p. 150, l. 26. Strode appears in a deposition in Dangerfield's *Second Narrative* as " of Shepton Mallet, Clothier " ; but the clothing trade was obviously not his only employment. How Shaftesbury first got in touch with him does not appear.

p. 151, l. 2. Dangerfield stated before the Privy Council on November 4th, 1679, that it took £60, " which in all places it cost him," to get him out of prison. This would appear by a book which Sir William Waller took out of his closet, he said.

p. 154, l. 29. Mary Blasedale, Mrs. Cellier's married daughter, quoting her recollection of what the nativity said, makes it prophesy that the subject " should die either by the sentence of a judge or be killed in a sea-fight " (Dangerfield's *Particular Narrative*).

p. 158, l. 29. For instance, Mr. Pollock, in *The Popish Plot*, p. 206, calls Dangerfield " the friend of Mrs. Cellier's bosom." He speaks (p. 205) of Mrs. Cellier's " profession of midwife and assuredly of something else."

p. 160, l. 25. Mansell's evidence in *An Exact and True Narrative of the late Popish Intrigue* corroborates Dangerfield's *Particular Narrative* here.

p. 162, *n.* Dangerfield asserts, both in his *Particular Narrative* and in his *Case*, that he had bail.

p. 164, l. 8. " I never chaing," as it appears on the cover of *Malice Defeated.*

p. 164, l. 27. The elicitation of evidence by torture would, nominally, invalidate the evidence ; which was why Mrs. Cellier was so anxious to prove that Prance was tortured. Neither Prance nor Dangerfield admitted torture. But they were in receipt of pensions !

p. 165, l. 14. For the report of what occurred at the various meetings of the Privy Council we have to rely on, or rather sift, the accounts of Mrs. Cellier and Dangerfield, both of whom naturally present the case in a manner favourable to themselves.

p. 171, l. 11. A news-letter of December 2nd, in *Cal. St. P.*, 1679, says that Mr. Dangerfield has his pardon under the Great Seal and is released from prison.

p. 171, l. 29. *St. T.*, VII.

p. 172, l. 26. The *Narrative* claims to be " of the late Popish Design to charge those of the Presbyterian Party with a pretended Conspiracy against His Majesty's Person and Government."

p. 174, l. 13. The report in *St. T.*, VII., is usefully supplemented by Mrs. Cellier's account in *Malice Defeated.* Occasionally she quotes the witnesses' statements against her more frankly than the official report.

p. 180, l. 9. Lionel Anderson, one of the priests tried at the Old Bailey on January 17th, 1680.

p. 180, l. 29. In full, *Tho. Dangerfield's Answer to a certain scandalous lying pamphlet entituled Malice Defeated.*

p. 181, l. 22. This appearance before the Privy Council is the last event recorded in *Malice Defeated.*

p. 182, l. 1. Robert Dormer was possibly a kinsman of Mrs. Cellier.

p. 182, l. 4. Mr. Pollock appears to be pained (*The Popish Plot*, p. 137) by the phrase, " hangman's hounds for weekly pensions." But really it seems very apt.

p. 183, l. 13. The picture of Mrs. Cellier is in the Bagford Collection in the British Museum.

p. 184, l. 6. The correct date is October 20th—not 26th, as appears on some copies of the *Information.*

p. 184, l. 8. *Cal. St. P.*, letter of October 26th, 1680.

p. 184, *n.* Luttrell, *Brief Historical Relation*, February 15th, 1681.

p. 186, l. 2. *Ib.*, June 18th, 1684. Luttrell makes Dangerfield "go aside" in the following August.

p. 186, l. 8. The *Memoires* is a pamphlet of thirty-seven pages of diary, with two prefatory pages, published by Charles Brome at some time in 1685 between Dangerfield's imprisonment and his death.

p. 191, l. 12. *Duke Dangerfield* was printed for J. Smith in 1685; *Mr. Dangerfield's Answer and Defence* for James Dean in the same year.

p. 192, l. 4. Luttrell seems to give the date of arrest as March 21st, if we read two paragraphs as coming under the same date.

p. 192, ll. 22–4. *St. T.*, XI. 503 *n.*; *A True Narrative of the Arraignment, Tryal, and Conviction of Thomas Dangerfield for High Misdemeanours*; Luttrell, *Brief Relation*, May 1685.

p. 195, l. 16. *St. T.*, XI. 503 *ff.*

p. 196, l. 1. In the evidence for the prosecution it was stated that, when one of the prison staff told Francis that Dangerfield would die, Francis replied that "it would save the hangman a labour." But perhaps we cannot rely too much on a turnkey's statement.

## PSALMANAZAR THE FORMOSAN

p. 202, l. 3. *The Memoirs of * * * * commonly known by the name of George Psalmanazar; a reputed native of Formosa* was first published in 1764, and republished in 1765.

p. 202, l. 24. From the "Last Will and Testament" we get the date 1679 or 1680. From the reference in the *Memoirs* to the Peace of Ryswick, making Psalmanazar to be "hardly full sixteen" at some period after September 1697 (see p. 205), we get a date not earlier than 1681. From the later statement in the *Memoirs* (see p. 228) that he was "scarce twenty" when he wrote the *Description of Formosa*, the date becomes as late as 1684. Curiously, the assertion in the latter work that he was nineteen when he left Formosa six years previous to 1704 gives us a date agreeing with that in the will. Yet the *Memoirs* profess to give facts, whereas the *Description* was entirely disowned.

p. 203, l. 2. Not the slightest clue has been found to the identity of Psalmanazar's father or mother. There have been some who doubt the veracity of the early part of the *Memoirs*. But there is force in what a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1764 (p. 503), says in introducing an abstract of the book: "He was distinguished for a piety so ardent and unaffected, and a life so blameless during the last fifty years, expressing at the same time such abhorrence of his former irregularities, and such contrition for them, that it is impossible to suppose him to relate any thing

in this work that is not true." This is not to say that he may not have made mistakes as to dates, or that with regard to his birthplace he may not have purposely mystified his readers.

p. 207, l. 22. Buchwald's regiment. See the letter of recommendation at the end of the second edition of the *Description of Formosa.*

p. 212, l. 17. This story is in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* February 1765, p. 78.

p. 213, l. 9. The Rev. Charles Leslie, author of *The Case stated between the Church of Rome and the Church of England* (1713), the book which fixed Psalmanazar's religious attitude. See p. 233 above.

p. 218, l. 13. *Gentleman's Magazine,* February 1765, p. 78.

p. 221, l. 14. In a manuscript note in a copy of the second edition of the *Description of Formosa* in the British Museum is a statement that " the author was brought to shame by a very few Questions put to him by the very ingenious Dr. Halley, who inquired concerning the duration of the Twilight and how long the Sun shone down the Chimneys every Year in Formosa. His Philosophy here failing him, he was detected never to have been in the Island." As we see, this is not Psalmanazar's view of his encounter with Halley.

Psalmanazar's " Captain Halley " is no doubt an allusion to the cruise which Halley took in 1698–1700, in command of a sloop-of-war lent by the Government, to study the variations of the compass.

p. 223, l. 6. In the *D. N. B.* the date of these pamphlets is given as 1710 ; but this does not appear certain.

p. 223, l. 21. Thomas Bowrey, author of a *Dictionary, English and Malayo, Malayo and English,* published in 1701.

p. 226, l. 5. Psalmanazar clearly had some acquaintance with medicine, however he had picked it up. His experiments into the blending of laudanum and other drugs, as described in the preface to his *Memoirs,* would have been dangerous to one without such knowledge.

p. 227, l. 25. His time from his twentieth to his thirty-second year, he says in one place, was " a sad blank to everything that was good or laudable."

p. 230, l. 14. The same Bower who wrote (and partly plagiarised) *The History of the Popes.*

p. 231, l. 24. This, as Dr. Birkbeck Hill remarks, is probably the alehouse in which Johnson used to meet " the metaphysical tailor," uncle of John Hoole the poet.

p. 231, ll. 28 *ff.* These stories of Johnson and Psalmanazar are all derived from Sir John Hawkins's edition of *Johnson's Works.*

p. 232, l. 28. He calls his preparation of laudanum " an improvement on what Dr. Jones gives us in his *Mystery of Opium.*"

p. 234, l. 22. See G. B. Hill, *Johnsonian Miscellanies,* I. 266–7.

p. 235, *n.* I take the story of "White Elk" from the *Observer* of July 5th, 1925, where it is stated that the pseudo-Iroquois chief was "Edgar La Plante, a native of Rhode Island, itinerant vendor of serpent-oil, film-actor, and variety-artist."

## YOUNG IRELAND: AN UNAPPRECIATED JESTER

p. 239, l. 10. Dr. C. M. Ingleby published in 1859 *The Shakespeare Fabrications*, the first appendix to which deals with W. H. Ireland's *Confessions*.

p. 239, l. 26. *The Authentic Account* was published in 1796, the *Confessions* in 1805. In the British Museum there are copies of both works with manuscript notes by Malone.

p. 240, l. 27. Ingleby's later researches are revealed in a paper read before the Royal Society of Literature in 1878, reprinted in the second volume of his *Shakespeare: The Man and the Book* (1881).

p. 241, l. 6. This letter is *Add. MSS.* 30346, folio 307, in the British Museum.

p. 241, l. 32. *Add. MSS.* 30346, folio 302.

p. 243, l. 2. In 1790 Samuel Ireland published his *Picturesque Tour through France &c.*, stating that he made this tour in the autumn of 1789. It is quite likely that he took his son with him to France; for the boy was then twelve, and four years in France would bring him to sixteen when he was fetched home and articled to Mr. Bingley. This tallies very well with the attribution of his first forgeries to 1794.

p. 243, l. 34. *Love and Madness* was published in 1780. Its author became Sir Herbert Croft, fifth baronet, in 1797.

p. 245, l. 19. The *Monthly Magazine* for November 1799.

p. 245, l. 36. About six months previous to his visit to Stratford-on-Avon, he says; and this visit was paid in October 1794, according to Malone's note in his copy of Ireland's *Authentic Account*.

p. 247, l. 29. Samuel Ireland's purchases at Stratford-on-Avon rather tend to confirm the idea of his credulity, which his son so strongly asserted later—unless we are to suppose Samuel bought the fakes knowingly.

p. 248, *n.* On Wallis's attitude in the whole affair, see p. 273.

p. 249, l. 34. Parr, in a note in his *Bibliotheca Parriana*, says indignantly, "Ireland told a lie when he imputed to me the words which Joseph Warton used." Ireland admits, in the preface to his edition of *Vortigern* in 1832, that he by mistake attributed Warton's remark to Parr; but he asserts that Parr concurred with Warton, and he trounces the then deceased Doctor soundly.

p. 250, l. 16. Talbot, who was one of the well-known Irish family, rose to be an actor-manager in Ireland, and has an article devoted to him in the *D. N. B.*

p. 252, l. 13. Ireland admits that his *Authentic Account* was "the production of perturbed moments"; and his *Confessions* were written nine or ten years after the events, so that we cannot rely on the chronology of either work.

p. 256, l. 27. It is worthy of note that the name of William Ireland occurs in the genuine deed of March 10th, 1612, which lent some colour to the young impostor's story.

p. 257, l. 6. Garrick's jubilee Shakespearian production at Stratford-on-Avon, in September 1769, had marked the beginning of a "boom" in Shakespeare.

p. 257, l. 19. *B. M. Add. MSS.* 30348, folio 22, has this draft agreement, with a note of the date, July 28th.

p. 258, l. 24. *Add. MSS.* 30349.

p. 260, l. 26. Samuel Ireland's own copy of the *Miscellaneous Papers* (*Add. MSS.* 30350) bears on the title-page the date 1796 in ink, corrected from 1797. The dedication, to the supporters of the publication, is dated December 1795.

p. 261, l. 4. With regard to Samuel Ireland's general honesty, it must be recorded that Horace Walpole, in 1787, complained that he had got hold of a copy of the frontispiece to a pamphlet which he was about to issue, in a very limited edition, about Strawberry Hill. We have, however, no confirmation of the story from other sources.

p. 262, l. 1. Ingleby's period is as late as 1823–86. He was led to attack the Irelands rather indirectly. In his work on *The Shakespeare Fabrications* his chief concern was with the misdeeds of John Payne Collier, and he threw in his appendix on W. H. Ireland's forgeries without sufficient personal investigation of the facts.

p. 263, l. 21. Sir Sidney Lee also contributes the article on Malone, whose character he views in a light which would certainly not have commended itself to the eyes of either Ireland.

p. 265, l. 16. Malone, in a manuscript note to his copy of the *Confessions*, characterises young Ireland's story of his issue of a notice as "all gross falsehoods."

p. 266, ll. 28 *ff.* See *Notes and Queries*, 1857, pp. 442 and 492, for the contributions of "Fr. Wh—h" and "J. M. G., an Octogenarian," to the tale of the *Vortigern* production. The former adds some details as to Kemble's "guying" of his part; but the latter does not corroborate them, and they are not mentioned by Ireland.

p. 267, l. 3. Ireland's account is given in the *Confessions*, there being little about the famous night in the *Authentic Account*.

p. 268, l. 14. It is Ireland who makes this allusion to *The Critic*.

p. 269, l. 26. Kemble's defence of his conduct is in *The Clubs of London* (1828), II. 107. It may be noted that in the *Times* account

of the performance Kemble and Sturt are both said to have been "hissed and pelted" (by sympathisers with the Irelands).

p. 272, l. 1 *ff.* The order of events following the Drury Lane fiasco cannot be exactly guaranteed, as Ireland's two accounts are confused and inconsistent, and there is not sufficient documentary evidence by which to check them.

p. 275, l. 33. Mrs. Freeman's note is *B. M. Add. MSS.* 30346, fol. 250.

p. 276, l. 19. *Ib.*, fol. 241.

p. 276, l. 28. *Ib.*, fol. 244.

p. 277, l. 1. *Ib.*, fol. 253.

p. 277, l. 8. It is impossible to reconcile the discrepancies as to the order of events between the *Authentic Account* and the *Confessions*. I have done my best, with the help of the unpublished Ireland papers in the British Museum, to arrive at the probable order.

p. 277, l. 30. *Add. MSS.* 30346, fol. 263.

p. 278, l. 15. *Ib.*, 30347, fols. 26–7.

p. 278, l. 29. *Ib.*, 30346, fol. 284.

p. 279, l. 11. *Ib.*, fol. 289.

p. 279, l. 16. *Ib.*, fol. 267.

p. 279, l. 22. This letter is quoted in the *Confessions*.

p. 280, l. 3. *Add. MSS.* 30346, fol. 303.

p. 280, l. 21. *Ib.*, fol. 302.

p. 281, l. 29. *Ib.*, fol. 312. It is to be noted that Samuel Ireland, in his advertisement to *Henry the Second* (1799), says that he had had only one meeting with his son since the latter left Norfolk Street; but his unpublished papers prove that there were two.

p. 283, l. 33. *Ib.*, fol. 314.

p. 284, l. 8. *Ib.*, fol. 315.

p. 284, l. 11. *Ib.*, fol. 317.

p. 284, l. 23. *Ib.*, fol. 319.

p. 285, l. 6. *Ib.*, fol. 325.

p. 285, l. 25. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1797, p. 931.

p. 285, l. 28. The *Herald* of February 2nd, 1798, announces that Mr. Ireland is going to sue for damages for a caricature of him with "curious references."

p. 289, l. 25. Boaden's *Inquiry into the Authenticity of the various Pictures and Prints of Shakespeare* bears the date 1824.

p. 293, l. 15. Catullus, 43. 7, *O sæclum insipiens et infacetum!*

# INDEX

# INDEX


A

Adams, 169
Ailesbury, Thomas Bruce, Earl of, 107
d'Amalvi, Isaac, 208, 221, 224
Ambrose (Ambrosius), *see* Oates
Anderson, Father Lionel, *alias* Munson, 180, 303
Anderton, Father Christopher, 88
Angus, Rev. Mr., 60
Anne, Queen, 130
Arnold, John, J.P., 81*n.*
Arundel of Wardour, Henry, Baron, 73, 90, 107
Ashburnham, Sir Denny, 15*n.*
Ashby, Father Richard, 31, 37 *ff.*, 71, 93, 94
Aston, Walter, Baron, 88, 108–9
Atkins, Capt. Charles, 67
Atkins, Sir Richard, Chief Justice, 66, 87, 93
Atkins, Samuel, 67, 69, 76, 78, 84
Attwood, Father John, 184–5

B

Barker, Sir Richard, 16, 25, 32, 36, 89, 92
Barnard, Mrs. Anna Maria, 240, 243, 263, 275
Bedingfield, Father Thomas, 37, 43, 46
Bedloe, James, 70, 74
Bedloe, William, 67 *ff.*, 74, 76, 79 *ff.*, 88–9, 94, 99, 100, 101, 104, 121, 135, 147, 150, 151, 171, 175
Bellasyse, John, Baron, 67, 68, 73, 77, 107
Berry, Thomas, 77, 78, 79
Berry, William, *see* Hutchinson
Bingley, Mr., 243, 245, 247, 250 272, 280, 306
Blasedale, Henry, 150, 161
Blasedale, Mrs. Mary, 150, 152
Blood, Col. Thomas, 32
Blount, Charles, 102
Boaden, James, 264, 269, 289–90 , 308
Boswell, James, 231, 254–5
Bower, Archibald, 230
Bowrey, Thomas, 223, 305
Bramston, Sir John, 194 *ff.*
Breedon, J. S., 278
Bridgewater, John Egerton, Earl of, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169–70
Brome, Charles, 186, 304
Brown, Constable, 61
Brown, Thomas, 13
Brumwell, William, 61, 83
Buckingham, George Villiers, 2nd Duke of, 155
Burn, 292
Burnet, Dr. Gilbert, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, 15, 20, 22, 23, 25, 35, 45, 48, 52, 55, 57, 60, 65, 69, 87, 159, 196, 212

C

Campbell, Dr. Alexander, 209
Castlemaine, Roger Palmer, Earl of, 74*n.*, 91, 102–3, 122, 153, 165, 171, 177–9, 185
Catherine (of Braganza), Queen, 69, 70–2, 92–4
Cellier, Mrs. Elizabeth, 77, 100, 102–3, 107, 136, 143, 146 *ff.*, 174–7, 181–3, 192, 301, 302, 303; her *Malice Defeated*, 143 *ff.*, 180, 181
Cellier, Peter, 146, 151, 155, 159, 163, 168, 171, 173, 176, 181, 193
Chalmers, George, 271

Chapman, Mayor of Bath, 94–5
Charles II., 30, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44 *ff.*, 50, 51, 52–3, 65, 69, 72, 78, 82, 86, 104, 106, 111, 112, 113, 117, 121, 153, 157, 160, 165, 169–70, 171, 185
Chatterton, Thomas, 244, 249, 279
Chatterton, Mrs., 244
Chiffinch, William, 35
Clarence, William Henry, Duke of, 258
Clay, Matthew, 89
Coleman, Father Edward, 41, 49, 50–1, 55, 56, 58, 72–3, 80, 81; his letters, 73
College, Stephen, 114–5
Compton, Dr. Henry, Bishop of London, 209, 210, 214, 217
Cony, Nathaniel, 82
Conyers, Father George, 38, 43, 48, 49
Corker, Father James, 92 *ff.*, 102
Coventry, Sir Henry, 61, 67, 157, 160, 161
Croft, Herbert, 243, 244, 254, 306
Crudge, Alice (Mrs. W. H. Ireland), 278, 284–5
Curtis, Elizabeth, 63

D

Dalby, William, 98
Danby, Thomas Osborne, Earl of, 45–6, 58, 100, 155
Dangerfield, Thomas, senior, 136, 139
Dangerfield, Thomas, junior, *alias* Willoughby: his eligibility as witness, 103; "the exactest rogue in nature," 135; actuated by lust of money, 135; some redeeming points, 135–6; his birth and childhood, 136, 301; the Scottish adventure, 136 *ff.*; returns as the Prodigal Son, 139; driven from home again, 139; his plea in *Don Tomazo*, 140; his alleged experiences abroad, 140–1; sets up as a false coiner, 141; some English vicissitudes, 141–3; Mrs. Cellier's account of his youth, 143–6; his convictions, 145; first meets Mrs. Cellier, 146; his prison employment, 149–50; set at liberty, 151; in Mrs. Cellier's service, 151; his various tales, 152 *ff.*; the "meal-tub" papers, 156; credited as lover to Mrs. Cellier, 158, 303; the Mansell affair, 159–61; recognised as a coiner, 161; before the Privy Council, 162; in Newgate again, 163; turns King's Evidence, 164 *ff*; his conversations with Mrs. Cellier in prison, 166–7; pardoned and released, 171; his first appearance as witness, 171; his *Narratives*, 172; witness against Mrs. Cellier, 175–7; in prison again, 177; finds his pardon and is released, 177; witness against Castlemaine, 177–9; not crushed by Scroggs, 179; his vendetta with Mrs. Cellier, 179–81; his *Information* published, 184; other publications, 185; "near low water," 186; his *Memoires*, 186; goes on the road, 187; at Oxford, 187; mistaken for the Duke of Monmouth, 188, 191; entertains friends, 189; his last week of freedom, 190; seen and arrested, 192, 304; his final trial and sentence, 192–3; *Dangerfield's Dance*, 194; his death, 195, 304; his startling record, 196; the puzzle of his culture, 196–7.
Deane, Sir Anthony, 101
De Burgh, Mrs. A. M., 291
Dolman, Sir Thomas, 167
Dormer family, The, 146, 302
Dorman, Robert, 182, 303
Doyley (D'Oiley), 161
Dryden, John, 13, 44
Dugdale, Stephen, 87–8, 90, 93, 102, 104, 107 *ff.*, 114–5, 121, 135

E

Earle, Miss, 277–8
Eden, Sir Frederick, 248–9
Edwards, Susan, 163, 165, 172, 176
Elizabeth, Princess, 286
Elliot, Rev. Adam, 119
Elliot, Mrs., 69
Evelyn, John, 25
Everard, Edmond, 113
Ewers (Evers), Father, 88

F

Fell, Dr. John, 13, 99
Fenwick, Father John, 31, 36, 37, 40, 41, 49, 51, 74, 75, 78; 85, 87 *ff.*, 92, 108
Ferguson, Robert, 86, 116, 300
Finch, Heneage, afterwards Earl of Nottingham, 78, 97, 107–8, 110
Fisher, Major, 98
Fitzharris, Edward, 113–4
Fogarty, Dr., S.J., 41, 43, 49
Fountenay (Fontenay), Father, 214, 216
Francis, Robert, 194–6, 304
Francis, Mrs., 195
Freeman, Mrs., 240–2, 243, 275–6, 277
Fuller, William, 128

G

Gadbury, John, 153, 154, 159, 165, 167–8, 170, 173, 174–5, 185
Garrick, David, 248*n.*, 273, 307
Garrick, Mrs., 273
Gascoigne, Sir Thomas, 102
Gavan, Father John, 85, 87 *ff.*, 92, 93
George, Prince of Wales, 259
Gerald, Father, 77, 78, 79
Gerard of Bromley, Digby, Baron, 30
Gibbons, Mrs. Mary, 54, 58, 63–4
Gibbons, Capt. Thomas, 54
Giles, John, 81*n.*
Gilray, James, 285
Goad, Dr. John, 16, 116
Godfrey, Benjamin, 54, 60, 63, 64
Godfrey, Sir Edmund Berry, J.P., 47, 48, 53 *ff.*; his body discovered, 61; inquest, 61–2; public funeral, 66; subsequent investigations into his death, 68 *ff.*, 120, 152, 155
Godfrey, Michael, 54, 60, 63, 64
Godfrey, Mrs. Sarah, 54
Godfrey, Thomas, 54, 58–9
Green, Robert, 77, 78, 79
Grey, Dr. Zachary, 297, 298
Griffith, William, 61, 62*n.*
Grove (Groves), John, 37, 39, 41, 45, 49, 74–5, 78, 90
Guilford, Francis North, Baron, 22

H

"H.", Mr., 251–2, 256, 259–60, 272, 273–4
Habernfeld, Andreas de, 33–4
Hackman, Rev. James, 243–4
Halford, Richard, 98
Halifax, George Savile, Viscount, 112, 184
Halley, Dr. Edmund, 221, 305
Halsall, Col. James, 157, 193
Halton, Dr. Timothy, 99, 184
Harcourt, Thomas, *see* Whitebread
Harcourt, Father William, 36, 37, 85, 88–9, 92
Harris, Thomas, 257
Hart, John, 246
Heard, Sir Isaac, 271
Hill, Lawrence, 77, 78, 79
Howard of Escrick, William, Baron, 118
Huddleston, Father John, 42
Hutchinson, Father William, *alias* Berry, 22–3, 27, 28, 32, 41, 108

I

Ingleby, Dr. C. M., 239, 246, 262–3, 273, 286, 288, 291–2, 306, 307
Ingoldsby, Sir Henry, 98
Innes, Rev. Alexander, 208 *ff.*, 216, 220, 222, 231

Ireland, Father William, 31, 37, 40, 74–5, 78, 93, 120, 124
Ireland, Jane, 240, 243, 263, 275, 277
Ireland, Samuel, 239 *ff.*, 261 *ff.* 282–6, 306, 307, 308
Ireland, William Henry: a playful forger, 239; his family, 240; the doubt as to his parents, 240–1; his letter of January 1797, 241, 282; early days, 242–3; goes to France, 243; indentured to Bingley, 243; trained in love of Shakespeare, 243; a young collector, 243; his admiration of Chatterton, 244; his first fake, 245; the motive, 245; visits Stratford-on-Avon, 246–7; forges a Shakespeare document, 248; takes in his father and Sir F. Eden, 248; forges Shakespeare's *Profession of Faith*, 249; curious spelling, 249, 252, 255, 258; his acquaintance with Talbot, 250; the plot with Talbot, 250–1; "Mr. H.", 251; more forgeries, 252; Queen Elizabeth's letter, 253–4; Boswell's credulity, 254; many other dupes, 255; *King Lear* and *Hamlet*, 255; the germ of *Vortigern*, 255; invents an ancestor, 256; *Vortigern* on view, 256; an offer from Covent Garden, 257; agreement with Drury Lane, 257; Sheridan's criticism, 257; meets the Duke of Clarence and Mrs. Jordan, 258; *Henry the Second*, 259; plans other plays, 259; importuned into allowing publication, 260; the question of his father's complicity, 261–4; the early denouncers, 264; Malone's attack, 262, 265; Kemble's and Mrs. Siddons's attitude, 266; *Vortigern's* first and last performance, 266 *ff.*; the catastrophe, 268; Mrs. Jordan's kindness, 269; young Ireland goes to bed, 269; his receipts from *Vortigern*, 270; Malone's *Inquiry*, 271; the Irelands *v.* Malone, 271; committee of investigation formed, 272; his torture, 272; his confession to Wallis, 273; makes Wallis an accessory, 273; his father's reproaches, 274; endeavours to exonerate Samuel, 274; leaves home for ever, 275; Mrs. Freeman's criticism of him, 276; some letters, 276–7; his secret marriage, 278; his relations with women, 278; in the West Country, 278–9; his pilgrimage to St. Mary Redcliffe, 279; more letters, 279; meets his father, 280; publishes his *Authentic Account*, 280, 307; his career as impostor ended, 282; still more letters, 282; his last meeting with his father, 283; resents attack on his wife, 284; wishes to go into court, 285; loses his father, 286; his struggles for a living, 286; publishes his *Confessions*, 287; his defence of himself, 287–8; nine years on the Continent, 289; at Mrs. Jordan's funeral, 289; his story of Boaden, 289–90; republishes *Vortigern*, 290; his death, 291; still pursued beyond the grave, 291–2; a jest that ruined a life, 293; controversy with Parr, 306.
Irwin, Anna Maria, 240

J

James II., *see* York, James, Duke of
Jane, Father, 152, 173
Jeffreys, Sir George, 75, 87, 96, 97, 120, 121 *ff.*, 176, 183, 192–3
"Jemmy," 136–7
Jenkins, Sir Leoline, 25, 116, 180, 184
Jenkins, Margaret, 149, 167, 168
Jennison, Robert, 93, 108

Jennison, Father Thomas, 40, 93, 108
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, 212, 231–2, 234, 305
Jones, Sir William, 79, 110
Jordan, John, 246, 263, 289
Jordan, Mrs., 258, 266, 267, 269
Judith, Sister, 189–90, 192

K

Kelly, Father Dominic, 77, 78, 79
Kemble, John Philip, 266, 268–9, 298, 307
Kéroualle, Henriette de, *see* Pembroke, Countess of
Ketch, Jack, 126
Keynes, Father John, 36, 37, 40, 41, 42
Kirkby, Christopher, 44, 47
Knox, Thomas, 100, 152, 171–2, 177

L

La Chaise, Père François de, 37, 38, 41, 50, 73
Lane, John, 100, 152, 171–2, 177
Lang, Robert, 255*n*.
Langhorn, Richard, 17, 90 *ff*.
Langworth, Father Basil, 36, 37, 40, 41
Latham, Dr. John, 286
Lauder, Brigadier George, 208, 210
Lauder, William, 288
Laurie, 245
Le Fevre, Father, 68, 79, 80
L'Estrange, Sir Roger, 18, 25, 27, 32, 33–5, 46, 47, 51, 53, 56, 59, 60, 62–4, 76, 77, 84, 103, 105–7, 110, 119, 120, 297, 298, 299, 135
Leslie, Rev. Charles, 213, 233, 305
Levinz, Sir Creswell, 89, 178
Linley, Thomas, 242, 257, 266
Linley, Mrs., 277
Linnet, Edward, 83
Llandaff, Dr. William Lloyd, Bishop of, 70
Lloyd, Sir Philip, 95
Lloyd, Dr. William, 48, 55, 57, 60, 62, 66, 77, 108
Lovelace, John, Baron, 99
Luttrell, Narcissus, 106, 184*n*., 193, 195, 304

M

Malone, Edmund, 239, 240, 246, 247, 255*n*., 260, 262, 264–5, 270–1, 281, 288, 290, 306, 307
Mansell, Col. Roderick, 153, 159 *ff*., 173, 181
Mark, 187, 189
Marshall, Father William, 92 *ff*., 102
Mary, Queen (Marie-Beatrice d'Este), *see* York, Duchess of
Mary, Princess, *see* Orange
Maynard, Serjeant, 173
Mead, Dr. Richard, 212
Medburne, Matthew, 21, 32, 42, 78, 86
Merry, Robert, 269
Monmouth, James, Duke of, 52, 99, 155, 157, 176, 188, 191, 194
Moor, Henry, 54, 59, 63
Mortimer, John Hamilton, 255
"My Dear," 189–90

N

Ness, Sister, 189–90
Nevill, Henry, *alias* Payne, 155, 168–9, 171
Newton, Mrs., 279
Nicholson, 112
Norfolk, Henry Howard, Duke of, 17, 22, 107
North, Dudley Baron, 71, 87, 90
North, Francis, *see* Guilford
North, Roger, 13, 17, 22, 51, 55, 65, 71, 136*n*., 157, 173, 179, 183, 185, 186, 302

O

Oates, Rev. Samuel, 14–5, 18–20, 25, 100, 120
Oates, Mrs. Samuel, 14, 16, 100, 130
Oates, Sam, 15, 104, 118

Oates, Titus: his impression on his contemporaries, 13–4, 297; as a child, 14; his extraction, 15; at Merchant Taylors' School, 15; expelled, 16; at Sedlescombe, 16; goes up to Cambridge, 16, 298; sent down, 17; slips into orders, 17; Vicar of Bobbing, but is dismissed, 17; goes to Hastings, 18; his feud with the Parkers, 18, 298; arrested, 19; escapes from Dover gaol, 20; becomes chaplain in the Navy and is expelled, 20; meets his old schoolmaster Smith, 20; his conduct as preacher, 22; enters the Duke of Norfolk's household, 22; received into the Roman Church, 23; when did he conceive the "Popish Plot"? 23 *ff.*; meets Dr. Tonge, 25; Simpson Tonge's account of, 26; becomes Jesuit postulant, 27; goes to Valladolid, 27, 298; "D.D. of Salamanca," 28; goes to St. Omer, 28; his conduct there, 29; expelled, 31; in low water in London, 32; his share, and Tonge's, in the Plot, 33 *ff.*; produces his 43 Articles, 36; the gist of the Articles, 36–44; they are introduced to the King, 45; the "Windsor letters," 46; visits Sir E. B. Godfrey, 47; a second visit, 48; before the Privy Council, 48–50; his Jesuit-drives, 49–51; declared by Charles "a most lying knave," 50; attacks Coleman, 51; the Plot fully launched, 51; in Whitehall, 52; his motto, "Set a rogue to catch a rogue," 52, 67; helped by Godfrey's murder, 53; at the bar of the Commons, 65; his insolence, 65; receives a large pension, 65; in competition with Bedloe, he attacks the Queen, 69; his acquaintance with Bedloe, 70; his famous accusation of Catherine, 71; arrested and released, 72; his prevarication about Coleman, 72; secures Coleman's execution, 73; his evidence against Ireland, Pickering, and Grove, 74; secures their deaths, 78; his fears, but triumph, 78; not prominent at the Godfrey murder trial, 79; his indecent rejoicing at the result, 81; publishes his *True Narrative*, 84; suborns William Smith, 85–7; his evidence against the Five Jesuits, 87; their defence against him, 89; he is upheld by Scroggs, 90; his evidence against Langhorn, 90; his cowardice in court, 91; the Jesuits and Langhorn condemned and executed, 92; but evidence against Sir George Wakeman fails, 93–7; Oates and Scroggs become enemies, 96; his popularity undiminished, 97; his company in Whitehall, 98; his pamphleteering, 98; his coat of arms, 98; visits Oxford, but gets no degree, 99; routed by a trooper, 99; his struggle with Mrs. Cellier begins, 100, 171–2; his mother's qualms, 100; attacks Scroggs, 101; some heavy reverses, 102; his attack on the Duke of York, 103; his pension reduced, 104; the affair of Simpson Tonge, 105 *ff.*; Oates *v.* L'Estrange, 105; "We shall have a Parliament," 105; his evidence against Lord Stafford, 107; his pension raised again, 111; goes to the Oxford Parliament, 112; Charles wins, 112; Oates and Fitzharris, 113–4; and Stephen College, 114–5; Oates's lament, 115; his attack on Dr. Goad, 116; reviles the King, 117; is accused of blasphemy, 117; expelled from Whitehall and his pension cut off, 117–8, 300; attempts to continue activities, 118; rejoices

over Shaftesbury's acquittal, 118; his attack on Elliot, 119; Oates *v.* L'Estrange again, 119; loses his father, 120; arrested for *scandalum magnatum*, 121; trial and conviction, 121; in the King's Bench, 121; his two trials for perjury, 122 *ff.*; makes a great fight, 122; his sentence, 126; his lashings, 126–7; his release by William of Orange, 128; pensioned again, 128; marries a rich widow, 129; becomes Anabaptist, 129; receives more money from William, 130; expelled by the Anabaptists, 130; his death, 130; a liar without excuse, 131; compared with Dangerfield, 135; his letter about Bedloe, 147; alleged attack by Dangerfield upon, 185; mentioned in connection with Monmouth's Rebellion, 301; the number of his victims, 301.
Oates, William, 15, 297
Oliva, J. P. de, General of the Jesuits, 38, 48, 90
Orange, Mary, Princess of, 128, 130, 144
Orange, William Henry, Prince of, 128, 130, 156
Ormonde, James Butler, Duke of, 43, 48

P

Paget, Mrs., afterwards Mrs. W. H. Ireland, 291
Paine, *see* Nevill
Palmer, Samuel, 228, 229, 230
Palmer, Mrs., 266
Pamphlin, Mrs. Judith, 54, 59, 63
Parker, William, senior, 18–9, 298
Parker, William, junior, 18–9, 298
Parr, Dr. Samuel, 249, 254, 290, 309
Pattenden, 225
Pemberton, Sir Francis, L. C. J., 113, 117
Pembroke, Henriette (de Kéroualle), Countess of, 300
Pembroke, Philip Herbert, 7th Earl of, 82–3
Pembroke, Thomas Herbert, 8th Earl of, 215, 229
Pepys, Samuel, 67, 101
Peterborough, Henry Mordaunt, Earl of, 154, 156–7, 166, 169, 170, 192
Peters, Father Charles, 37, 39
Petre, William, Baron, 73, 107
Petre, Father Edward, 75, 88, 92
Peyton, Sir Robert, 154, 170, 174
Phillimore, 268
Pickering, Thomas, 38, 39, 41, 45, 49, 74–5, 90, 96
Piozzi, Mrs., 234
Plunkett, Dr. Oliver, Roman Catholic Bishop of Armagh, 114
Portsmouth, Louise (de Kéroualle), Duchess of, 300
Powell, Mrs., 266
Powis, William Herbert, Marquis of, 68, 73, 90, 107, 108, 152, 153, 161, 193
Powis, Lady, 102, 147, 151*n.*, 152 *ff.*, 161, 162, 165, 169, 171, 173, 174, 179, 193
Powle, Henry, 110
Prance, Miles, 76 *ff.*, 88, 90, 93, 121, 127, 299, 300, 148, 164, 182, 303
Preston, Sir Thomas, 40, 118
Price, Mrs., 102
Pritchard, Father Charles, 69, 80
Psalmanazar, George: a faker rather than forger, 201; his "vanity," 202; birth-year, 202; the riddle of his identity, 203, 304; a native of Southern France, 203; his early training, 202; goes to Avignon, 204; his first fraud, 205; visits his father, 206; makes himself out Japanese, 206; at Aix-la-Chapelle, becomes a soldier, 207; the "Japanese heathen," 207; meets Alexander Innes, 208; Innes detects his fraud, 209;

" converts " him, 210 ; and takes him to London, 211 ; the Formosan legend, 211–12 ; silences Dr. Burnet, 212 ; his admiration for Charles Leslie, 213 ; cried up for a prodigy, 213 ; writes his *Description of Formosa*, 214 ; his duel with Father Fountenay, 214 ; develops Formosan legend, 215–6 ; his loose chronology, 217, 228 ; goes to Oxford, 217 ; his cannibal stories, 218 ; a sketch of him, 219 ; deserted by Innes, 220 ; his affections, 220 ; is detected by Halley, 221 ; more Formosan wonders, 222 ; writes a religious dialogue, 222 ; attempts to confirm his tales, 223 ; disbelief in him spreads, 224 ; crushed by ridicule, 225 ; in partnership with Pattenden, 225 ; becomes a regimental chaplain, 226 ; more changes of occupation, 227 ; taken up by a printer, 227 ; his reformation, 228 ; begins his *Memoirs*, 229 ; his literary activities, 229–30 ; his first public confession, 230 ; his old age, 231 ; friendship with Dr. Johnson, 231–2 ; his laudanum-taking, 232 ; abstemious diet, 233 ; his preference for the English Church, 233 ; his Last Will and Testament, 234, 304 ; a pious end, 234 ; the cleavage in his life, 235 ; a curious modern parallel, 235*n.*, 306 ; a comparison with, resented by Ireland, 288*n.*
Pye, Henry James, 254

R

Radcliffe, Sir Francis,
Rawson, John, 61
Ray, Martha, 243
Reresby, Sir John, 67
Rewalling, Sarah, 234
Richardson, Capt. William, 146, 147, 149, 162, 166, 167, 170, 182
Ritson, Joseph, 264, 288
Robinson, 57
Rode, Father de, 215, 224
Rumley, Father, 92 *ff.*
Russell, Lord William, 114
Ruth, Sir Richard, 20

S

St. Omer witnesses, The, 30, 89, 91, 123, 151
Sandwich, John Montagu, 4th Earl of, 244
Savile, Henry, 112
Scroggs, Sir William, L. C. J., 17, 19, 72, 74, 75, 79, 87 *ff.*, 97, 101–4, 111, 113, 159, 172, 174 *ff.*
Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of, 35, 82, 86, 97, 101, 103, 104, 106, 118, 119, 149, 150, 152, 153, 155, 156, 160, 163, 166, 300
Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, 242, 257, 269
Siddons, Mrs., 266
Sing, Edward, 185, 192
Slater, Dr., 21–2
Sloane, Dr. Hans, 215
Smith, Aaron, 98
Smith, John, 107
Smith, Rev. Samuel, 195
Smith, William, schoolmaster, 14, 16, 17, 20 *ff.*, 32, 42, 81, 85–7, 89, 98, 100, 104, 115, 116–7
Smith, William, informer, 98
Stafford, William Howard, Viscount, 28, 90, 107 *ff.*
Steevens, George, 248, 264, 281
Strange, Father Richard, 27, 28, 36, 37, 38
Strode, William, 149–50, 152, 302
Sturt, Captain, 268, 308
Suiman (Swiman), Father Hierom, 36, 37
Sunderland, Robert Spencer, Earl of, 71
Sutton, Sir James Bland, 267

T

Talbot, Montagu, 250–1, 256, 261, 274, 275, 276, 306
Talbot, Peter, Archbishop of Dublin, 38, 43
Tasborough, John, 102
Tenison, Dr. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, 213
Throckmorton, Sir William,
Tonge, Dr. Ezreel, 23, 24–7, 29, 31, 32 *ff.*, 40, 44 *ff.*, 81, 82, 86, 104, 106, 114, 301
Tonge, Capt. John, 106
Tonge, Simpson, 26–7, 29, 32, 105–6
Triphook, Robert, 289
Turberville, Edward, 108–9, 114–5, 121
Turner, Father Anthony, 85, 87, 92

V

Villette, Rev. Mr., 203

W

Wakeman, Sir George, 40, 41, 45, 49, 71, 92 *ff.*
Waldron, Francis Godolphin, 290
Waller, Sir William, 76, 152, 153, 158, 163, 164, 169, 181
Wallis, Albany, 248*n.*, 253, 257, 273–4, 276, 277, 279–80, 281, 284
Walpole, Horace, 307
Walsh, Father Charles, 68, 80
Walters, John, 61, 83
Warcup, Edmond, J.P., 117, 161, 162
Waring, Father, 31
Warner, Father John, 13, 297
Warton, Dr. Joseph, 249–50, 306
Watson, Dr. Thomas, 16
Webb, 173
Welden, Col. George, 56, 59
Wells, Mrs. Margaret, 129
Wesley, 187
Weston, Sir Richard, Baron of the Exchequer, 181–2
White, Mrs. Mary, 147
Whitebread, Father Thomas, *alias* Harcourt, 31, 38, 39, 40, 43, 47, 49, 50, 73, 75, 78, 85, 87 *ff.*, 92
Willcocks, Alderman, 104
Williams, Sir William, 170, 185
Williams, Mr., of Clopton House, 247
Williamson, Sir Joseph, 48, 50, 62, 67, 77, 195
Willoughby, Capt., *see* Dangerfield
Withins, Sir Francis, 123, 125–6
Wood, Anthony, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 25, 98, 99, 196, 298
Worsley, Father, 142, 144
Wynell, Thomas, 57

Y

York, James, Duke of, afterwards James II., 29, 31, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 46, 51, 66, 99, 103–4, 111, 120, 127, 128, 150, 156–7, 166, 170, 184, 192, 196
York, Anne Hyde, Duchess of, 147
York, Mary (Marie-Beatrice d'Este), Duchess of, 41, 51, 55, 150